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# COUNTRY LIFE

OFFICES: 2, TAVISTOCK STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2.

VOL. XLV. No. 1158.  
Entered as Second-class Matter at the  
New York, N.Y. Post Office.

[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O.  
AS A NEWSPAPER, AND FOR  
CANADIAN MAGAZINE POST.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 15th, 1919.

Published Weekly, PRICE ONE SHILLING  
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# COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XLV.—No. 1158.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15<sup>th</sup>, 1919.

PRICE ONE SHILLING, POSTAGE EXTRA.  
[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]



E. O. HOPPE

VISCOUNTESS ALTHORP.

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Telegrams: "COUNTRY LIFE," LONDON: Tele. No.: GERRARD 2748.  
Advertisements: 8—11, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, W.C.2: Tele. No.: REGENT 760

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## The Demand for an Agricultural Policy

EVERYBODY feels, though it may be difficult to define the reason for it, that a certain paralysis has recently begun to show its symptoms in agriculture. The farmers, not without reason, are demanding in ever louder tones to know what are the intentions of the Government. They have a great addition of arable land upon their hands, and the assumption was that they would go on producing increasing quantities of cereal crops until they brought the country within range of being self-supporting in this respect. But, looking in front of them, they see that guaranteed prices stand a chance, to say the least, of being dropped while the expenses of farming are still very high. Wages are unlikely to fall, manures continue dear, and store animals of all kinds are only to be had at high prices. They therefore say that it devolves upon the agricultural leaders to sound a clear note as to what is to be done in the future. They are dissatisfied with the attitude of the President of the Board of Agriculture. He urged them with great eloquence to concentrate upon producing the utmost quantity of food that the nation required, but ended there, or, rather, he diverged into a discourse upon other topics. No one would question the truth of what he laid down. Trades unions are not applicable to agriculture, where the hours of labour cannot be measured as in a factory; co-operation is very much needed, and so on and so on. There is no questioning the wisdom of Lord Ernle. On these matters he spoke like an oracle. But, however golden

may be the language of a man who does not answer a plain question, that eloquence is apt to be thrown away. The farmers want to know just what inducements are held out to make them increase the productivity of the soil. Nobody seems to care to probe the matter to the bottom. A great many farmers—probably a considerable majority of them—would regard it as a good solution if Free Trade were dropped and embargoes put upon food products whenever they were sent in at a cheaper rate than they could be grown at in this country. But there is always a reservation in the agricultural mind when this argument is produced. It is that the industrial population will not have it so. To speak frankly, it seems hopeless to expect that any statesman or politician of influence will attach his name to a plan for taxing food. The industrialists are in the majority and they will not have it. There is the alternative of giving a bounty, but this does not commend itself to the financial authorities, who recognise that the maintenance of the loaf at the ninepenny standard has been very costly to the nation.

Supposing it were agreed that the farmer should have a guaranteed minimum price for his wheat; for argument's sake let us say fifty shillings. Then the Government would have to pay the difference when he received forty-five shillings. That would be expense with no other return save the compliance of the farmers with the official demand for increased production. At any rate, if a duty were imposed, the return from it would be available for paying the interest on the National Debt or any other financial purpose. The advantage of the bounty system is that it would be a means of avoiding the clamour of the industrial population against taxing human food. We state the case, as we hope, clearly, but it is for the leaders and statesmen of the country to thrash the matter out and decide which way to take. The most fatal policy is to stand aside and let things drift. Historians will remember that after the Peninsular War, which terminated with the Battle of Waterloo, there ensued a depressing time for agriculture. It is the business of leaders to profit by experiences and to avoid the disastrous results of just a hundred years ago.

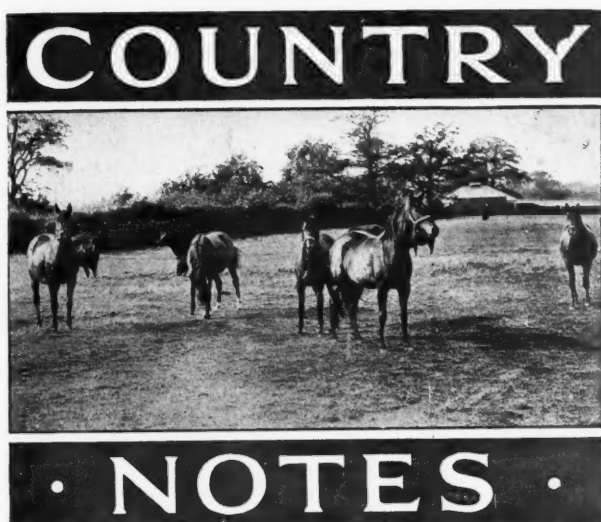
On the other hand, there is an alternative possibility in the direction of following up that cry for increased productivity uttered last week by the Prime Minister. It is another method by means of which the farmer may obtain the financial return which would meet the great expenses thrust upon him. In its favour is the fact that if done successfully it would leave agriculture standing squarely upon its own feet—not buttressed up either by the Government or anyone else. The question is, can it be done? The English farmer may recall the example of Belgium, which after 1831 developed the resources of the land to such an extent that from being one of the poorest it became one of the richest nations, proportionately, in Europe. In order to increase productivity the farmer has a choice of means in the use of which he may most legitimately ask help of the State. One is an improved scientific education; another, the acquisition and use of the best and latest machinery, particularly that of labour and time saving; and the third, the introduction of crops such as sugar beet which will be profitable in themselves and also improve the yield of the other farm crops. But here again leadership and statesmanship are urgently needed to provide help and guidance. Precedents could be stated for any of the courses to which we have referred. Germany developed her agriculture most successfully with a view, first, to keeping her people at home and stopping the emigration which, thirty years ago, was like an endless bleeding of the Fatherland, and, secondly, to make the country self-supporting. Her statesmen had no scruple about using any means that would produce the desired result. But the need of the hour in Great Britain is for a leader who will carefully think out the most effectual plan for establishing home agriculture on a sound basis and will pursue that end with relentless determination.

## Our Frontispiece

WE print as frontispiece to this week's issue of COUNTRY LIFE a portrait of Viscountess Althorp, whose marriage to Captain Viscount Althorp, 1st Life Guards, eldest son of Earl Spencer, K.G., took place on February 26th. Viscountess Althorp, before her marriage Lady Cynthia Hamilton, is the second daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Abercorn.

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FARMERS with excusable impatience are demanding from the President of the Board of Agriculture a clear statement of the after-the-war policy of the Government. Everywhere it is stated in high-sounding terms that the supply of food must be kept up, but the agriculturist looking abroad sees that we might very easily be inundated with foreign supplies. To take only one case. America ceased to export wheat some time ago mainly because the virgin soil of the country was partially exhausted, and the American farmer had not settled down to the assiduous manuring and cultivation which are necessary in an old country. If he really farmed in the European sense there would be a huge surplus of food to export. That is a possibility which the British farmer cannot ignore. If he is to be exposed to the competition that brought ruin to the landed interest in the eighties and nineties of last century he would rather take what profit he has made and leave the land to someone else. But if there is one principle to which politicians of all shades of opinion are committed more than to another it is that British agriculture shall be put on such a basis as will make it self-supporting in itself and a machinery for supplying the maximum amount of food to the people. What is wanted now is a clear statement of the means by which this end is to be attained.

THERE are many features in Mr. Drage's report on cottages deserving of close attention. One is the fact which emerges that in a great number of districts cottages exist to a degree that would be almost sufficient if they were not either too small or too much out of repair. It points to a new standard of taste in the agricultural labourer and his family. They revolt at having to dwell in a hovel where they have not the room to observe the most ordinary rules of decency. The two-roomed cottage and even the one-roomed cottage is much too prevalent in our villages. We do not, of course, wish to argue that all cottages should have three bedrooms. On the contrary, there are many single women and single men, too, who in the decline of life would rather live in a very small house than in a comparatively large one. But the supply should be strictly limited, because there is always the danger of a family for whom such a place is not intended getting in, and overcrowding follows. It will also be noticed that in many districts agricultural labourers have reason to complain of what they regard as unfair competition for such cottage accommodation as exists. If there are mines in the neighbourhood the men willingly pay two or even three times what the agricultural labourer can afford. Week-enders of one kind and another, too, are in the habit of taking a cottage by the year, although they may use it only occasionally. There ought to be some means of alleviating this cause of dissatisfaction. Miners in receipt of good wages ought to see to it that they are provided with adequate dwellings either by their employers or some other agency. In a district near Newcastle their co-operative store has taken the matter in hand and vastly improved the dwellings. It seems intolerable that week-enders of any sort or description should be allowed to displace the agricultural labourer.

PLOUGHING has been much hindered by the hard frosts of this year, and any way of saving skilled labour, which is already scarce and dear, and quickening up the work is now

of twofold value. Considerable progress has been made in the United States in the last few years in economising both labour and horses in ploughing by the use of big ploughs with large teams. And it is worth while to examine this American practice, although in England conditions are very different; for on the majority of farms the fields are too small to work with big teams, and the land itself also is easier to work owing to its having been tilled from time immemorial, and owing to the very different climatic conditions of our winters, which make the use of two-bottom ploughs possible in this country with teams which could only draw a single bottom plough on the average American field. The difference in efficiency in ploughing in the various States is very striking. In New England two horses and a ten-inch plough and one acre per day have been the rule; in Pennsylvania and Ohio sulky ploughs with three horses plough two to three acres per day; and in Iowa and Illinois two-bottom ploughs with four or five horses turn four to five and a half acres per day; while in Idaho, Oregon and Washington three-bottom ploughs with eight or ten horses are used by the better farmers and plough eight to ten acres per day. It is found in the States that there are two great difficulties to be overcome if these large teams are to be used effectively. The first is that a high degree of horse-mastership is necessary in the man handling the team; the second, that types of hitches must be found which will equalise the work and enable all the horses to work to the best advantage. The investigation of what hitches are most practicable for large teams was taken up by Mr. Wayne Dinsmore, working in conjunction with Professors E. A. White and J. L. Edmonds of the Illinois Experimental Station. Their results are given in the article "Ploughing with Large Teams" in this number.

#### RONDEL OF SPRING.

(From the French of Charles of Orleans.)

The Time has cast his cloak away  
Of wind and bitter frost and rain,  
And dressed himself in broderie gay  
Of light and azure without stain.

No beast, no bird in wood or way  
That does not cry again—again,  
The Time has cast his cloak away  
Of wind and bitter frost and rain.

River and fountain, streams that stray  
In livery bright across the plain,  
Filling the air with their refrain,  
Silver and gold again display.

—The Time has cast his cloak away.

H. DE VERE STACPOOLE.

GENERAL PLUMER with characteristic decision has intervened in the deliberations of the Peace Conference to very good purpose. On Saturday last, when the Council of Ten were sitting and discussing the conditions under which Germany should be supplied with food, a telegram arrived from Sir Herbert Plumer to the Prime Minister which the latter read at once to the Council. The General's message was to the effect that, as far, at least, as Western Germany is concerned, a state of famine is prevailing, and that an immediate supply of food is necessary to counteract Bolshevism. It reminds us a little of the proverbial advice given by a woman friend to the wife of a surly husband, "Feed the brute." But, indeed, there is no disputing the absolute good sense of the request. The shortness of victuals in Germany is now established past dispute, as far as the commonalty is concerned. There are always a selfish few who obtain provisions in the hardest times, and Hunger is the faithful handmaiden of Revolution. It is idle to expect either orderliness or industry from a starving country, and, to put it on no higher ground, the interest of the Allies lies in the direction of establishing government in Germany and a stoppage of Spartacist barbarities. It certainly would not be for the advantage of the human race for the cruel and bloody anarchy now rampant in Russia to spread over those other European countries which but a lustrum ago boasted of their civilisation.

EVERY right-thinking German will welcome the resolution of the Peace Conference that the German army shall consist of a maximum of 100,000 men, who will be volunteers and serve twelve years. This puts an end to conscription in the country where militarism used to be most rampant.

Young Germans hated the system because it interfered with their civil careers at the most critical time of life. Many of those who took refuge in this country or crossed over to the United States were animated chiefly by a desire to escape military service. The voluntary system is better in this case at any rate than a short service conscript system. If 100,000 men were to be brought up annually and trained there would soon be a majority of the German youths ready to take the field at any moment. Besides all this, the history of the war shows the absolute folly of spending huge sums annually on an army. We in this country and in the United States also were able in a very short time to put a great army into the field by means of intensive training, and what has been done once can be done again. Of course, it will be remembered that in his day Napoleon, too, tried to disarm the Germans, and we hope that the present scheme will have better luck than its predecessor. It is meant as a preliminary to the abolition of compulsory service in every country. If that idea can be practically applied, it will, at any rate, carry with it an immense saving of expenditure.

CAMBRIDGE is going to add to its numerous activities a

Professorship of Aeronautical Engineering. This is due to the generosity of Mr. Emile Mond, who, as a memorial to his son, Lieutenant Francis Mond, who was killed in action while flying on the western front, has offered to present £20,000 in War Stock to the University as a foundation. The proposal was commended by General Seely of the Air Ministry, which views it with favour. They are willing to station a flight or even a squadron at Wyton Aerodrome, and the officer commanding this unit would be instructed to carry out the requirements of the University authorities. The Vice-Chancellor of the University and his colleagues composing the Council of the Senate have naturally recommended that the generous offer of Mr. Emile Mond should be accepted and the new Chair be called the "Francis Mond Professorship of Aeronautical Engineering," according to his desire. Cambridge is a very appropriate place in which such a Chair should be located. It has always been distinguished for pre-eminence in the study of the exact sciences. Aeronautics must form one of the great industries of the future, and it is now in a position to profit vastly from the improvements which scientific study may devise. Nothing but good can result from this enlargement of the scientific side of University training.

THE Council of the Road Improvement Society has made no delay in formulating a very strong and definite objection to the proposal embodied in the Bill to Establish a Ministry of Ways and Communications to transfer the management of the roads to the Minister of Transport. In a resolution which was passed the other day it is pointed out that the roads are "non-revenue earning and free means of transport." They vary in construction and maintenance in all parts of the country, and they are used by every description of transport and by pedestrians. In these particulars they are unlike railways, and in consequence might suffer from association with them. The Council has arrived at the opinion that any scheme dealing with roads should provide for a department for that sole purpose. They are not in favour of abolishing the Road Board, and they are convinced that the ownership and control of the main roads should be a national instead of a local concern. Those who have given a fair amount of thought to the problems of the highway will heartily endorse this deliverance. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine what defence of the Bill against this proposed emendation can possibly be set up in the House of Commons.

THE foundation of an Army Cricket Association with the object of fostering and encouraging cricket in all ranks is an excellent thing, and the Committee, which includes a number of well known cricketers, will find plenty of good work waiting to be done. Anybody who played in the humbler kind of Army cricket during the war must have been struck by the fact that the game needed all the encouragement it could get. Men who could happily kick a football about day after day, even beneath a midsummer sun, could hardly be enticed into a solitary game of cricket. It was not so much that they did not like the game as that they felt strange and shy because they knew so little about it. They were not backsliders, but merely benighted heathens. They could all talk learnedly of football and, even when they were not good players, could imitate the tricks and mannerisms

of their favourite professionals, but for the most part they scarcely knew a half volley from a long hop. An eleven drawn from an average unit might contain three or four reasonably skilful players, but the rest were utterly bucolic in their methods and the last few wickets went down like ninepins. If education be not too solemn a word in respect to a game, then we hope that the Army Association will educate their men in cricket, for it is a game of which nobody can properly appreciate the beauties unless he knows just something of those fundamental doctrines of which the most sacred relates to the straight bat.

IT is fairly certain that public opinion will support the favourable consideration of the Channel Tunnel project which is being given it by the Government, according to a statement in Parliament by Mr. Bonar Law. Years ago, when first mooted, it gave rise to very strong opposition, but this is a matter on which the war has had a very educative effect. This method of education was that of showing an entire change of circumstances. Against aircraft our island enjoys few advantages as compared with other countries. Berlin was defended by its distance from the battle line more effectually than Great Britain was defended by its circuit of water. Thus the danger attending the excavation of a Channel tunnel is no longer what it was at the end of last century. But it is not only on the negative side that enlightenment has been thrown. Had we possessed a Channel tunnel during the war, it would have been a much quicker and easier passage for the transport of troops, and what holds good of war holds good of peace. The Channel tunnel will bring the Continent nearer to Great Britain; that is to say, make it easier of access, and that in itself constitutes a very great benefit alike to commerce and those who travel for their personal ends.

#### THE PRINCESS OF CATHAY.

(Written at Ruhlben.)

Swish of silk and bray of song  
Bear the palanquin along!  
Crystal flash and burning gold,  
Azure curtains, fold on fold.

Crimson sash and sable bow,  
See the bristling archers go!

Solemn princes of the land,  
Snow-white sole on yellow sand,  
Sleeves of blue where dragons crawl  
Round and round a fiery ball.

Suddenly an evening breeze  
Bowling the anemones  
At the roadside where I stand;  
Parts the curtain and I see—  
Just a little quiet hand  
Resting on a silken knee.

IN our Correspondence columns this week "A Country Squire's Wife" explains a difficulty which must be felt by many who are in a similar position to that of the writer. Before the war, and again now that it is over, she has devoted much of her time and attention to enlivening and interesting the villagers. But the difficulty experienced has been that of finding a suitable place for her lectures, concerts, and so on. She suggests, in no irreverent spirit, that for this purpose the church might be utilised, and it is difficult to imagine any real objection to that being done. In early times no hesitation was felt about utilising the churches for many purposes. In the Presbyterian places of worship in the North of England it is common to-day to hold meetings, give lectures and even tea-parties, and there is no disrespect or any offensive feeling implied thereby. The advantages following such a course as that proposed by our correspondent are fairly obvious. It would help the parson to keep in touch with his people. It is good neither for them nor for him that they should know him almost exclusively in the pulpit. He will be a greater influence for good if he enters as fully as he can into their daily life and amusements. There may be some perfectly innocent entertainments which would be out of place within the four walls of a church, but those alluded to by our correspondent certainly do not come into the category. They are calculated towards that spiritual education which comes from refined pleasure combined with a certain educative element.



# THE FACTS ABOUT RURAL COTTAGES

**W**AGES and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture" is a Blue Book in two volumes that provides a most interesting survey of English farm life. It is based on an enquiry made in 1917 in connection with the Minimum Wage Regulations. Many new and unofficial minds were brought to bear on the problem. Three counties were allotted to Mr. Maurice Hewlett, three divisions of Lincolnshire to Mr. R. G. Hatton. Mr. Bickerdike, Mr. A. H. D. Cochrane and Mr. A. E. Bradley are names familiar for reasons other than a connection with agriculture. Sixteen in all were employed, and they reply by counties in Vol. II. In Vol. I Mr. Geoffrey Drage, statistician and Director of Investigation, reviews, analyses and arranges the information into a sort of modern Domesday Book which is likely to be much discussed and referred to in the days to come. At the moment attention is concentrated on the Cottage section because it is the interest of the hour; otherwise it would have been tempting to take, as the corner-stone of the edifice, the fact that the average English holding is  $65\frac{1}{2}$  acres in extent and employs about two men and a half, or to be precise 2.9 labourers. Where the owner came from, what he grows, how he gets on with his men—these are but a few of many tempting lines of enquiry one day to be followed up. For the moment, however, it may be better to concentrate on the enquiry how these two labourers, whom we may consider permanent, with their wives and little folk, and the 0.9 of a labourer, which may roughly be taken as casual or seasonal, are lodged. For one thing, other questions were distorted by the war. How could it be otherwise? The young and able were in the name of patriotism ordered to work as soldiers on a pittance of eighteenpence a day, their lodging a wet and muddy trench, their work that of killing, their danger that of disablement and death. But such as escaped the ordeal and remained at home to go on with the everyday task or engaged in making munitions, aircraft and other material of war were paid as never before. With confusing results!

But let us speak of cottages. Mr. Geoffrey Drage discusses the question with the clear, cold brain of a man of science and figures. He begins with Mr. Little's report in 1895, and notes that though nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since this report was published, the present investigation shows that nothing has been done. First, as to the tied cottage Mr. Drage makes a few sensible remarks. The following extract gives the gist of his conclusions, although these are to some extent widened and modified by the context only one cannot quote all, and those being interested should get the report: "The objections to the tied cottage come down really to its involving a loss of the labourer's independence, and I am not at all sure that this loss of independence has not been, in no small degree, exaggerated. No doubt, if he changes his employer he changes his home—as, indeed, other classes have to—often, too, when they remain in the same employment. The village policeman must break up his home when he is transferred to another district; the local station-master, and the other railway employees, have to face the same hardship; the rector of the parish cannot change his work without sacrificing his home—the bank clerk in the country town—all these may be said in a degree to sacrifice their independence, so far as the desire to keep the same home hampers their wish to change their employment."

## THE SUPPLY OF COTTAGES.

Here is a concise summary of Mr. Drage's analyses of the various reports:

**I.—Northern Counties.** No grave deficiency in number, but quality low, with consequent overcrowding, especially in Northumberland. Cottages originally built for farm labourers are taken by navvies able to give a higher rent. Investigator's view is "that there should be an obligation on the large employers of labour—the railway companies, the local authorities and the mine owners—to supply cottages for their employees, instead of allowing them to squeeze out of the farm workers' cottages the persons for whom they were originally intended." In the Furness Division of Lancashire the agricultural labourer is forced out of his cottage by competition of the industrial hand. Housing in Durham "abominable" owing to smallness and overcrowding.

**II.—Eastern Counties.** East Riding of Yorkshire—good supply in the West, but in the Wold and Holderness areas cottages in bad condition. Some have but one bedroom and are mere hovels. Kesteven Division of Lincolnshire—short supply and many one bedroom cottages. Norfolk—

out of a total of 635 parishes deficient supply occurs in 286 parishes. Mr. Drage directs special attention to the Medical Officer's report, which says: "Up to August, 1914, when war was declared, the housing question was receiving serious consideration, voluntarily and methodically by some district councils: spasmodically by others, and only under Local Government Board pressure by a few. The general character of the defects found in houses in the various districts may be stated once for all: Defective roofs; damp walls and floors; insufficient or no eaves, gutters and down spouts; rotten floor boards; dangerous stairs; insufficient window space for light and ventilation; overcrowding; defective and foul drains and privies. In numerous instances many of these defects were remedied by the owners. As regards the provision of new cottages, under the Housing Act increasing activity was being manifested, but the war, unfortunately, nipped in the bud some promising schemes." Suffolk shows a state of things very similar. The state of affairs in Cambridgeshire is thus summed up by the Medical Officer of Health: "(1) There is an undoubted need of additional houses for the working classes, in both the Urban and Rural areas, especially for houses with three bedrooms. (2) That private enterprise and Public Utility Societies have failed to remedy the deficiency, and are unlikely to do so immediately after the war. (3) That in view of the insanitary condition of much of the old cottage property, especially in the rural districts, the estimate that 800–850 new houses are required (150 Urban, 650–700 Rural) is probably an underestimate."

**III.—Home Counties.** Buckinghamshire—Out of thirty parishes in Buckingham district twenty-six had empty cottages. Out of forty-five parishes in Newport Pagnell district thirty-one had empty cottages. A considerable demand for cottages by golfers and week-enders. In Surrey cottages fairly good but not enough. No complaint in Middlesex, but residents largely urban. Hertfordshire "fairly satisfactory."

**IV.—South-Eastern and South-Western Counties.** In the south-east of Kent and in the well cultivated districts round Maidstone and between Chatham and Canterbury the situation is fairly satisfactory, but it is not so in the south-eastern and eastern weald. Mr. Drage sums up the description of the housing in Kent as "less bad than it is in many counties." There is a shortage in Sussex and dissatisfaction in Dorset. In Hampshire the farms are fairly well equipped. In Devonshire, of sixteen districts eleven have cottages sufficient or just sufficient for their needs. In one district there were 123 vacant, of which fifty-four were fit for habitation. On the whole Devonshire, as far as cottages are concerned, is above the average. There is no great shortage in Somerset, and in Cornwall owing to "the withdrawal of so many men from the land the cottage accommodation is not unduly strained."

**V.—Midland Counties.** Wiltshire is short of cottages, and a great many of those existing are insanitary and in a bad state of repair. In Gloucestershire there is no serious lack of cottages in the rural districts, and in some districts a large number of cottages are vacant. The large demands come from the manufacturing district of Stroud and the coal and iron district of the Forest of Dean. In Shropshire the Medical Officer of Health says "there is a shortage throughout the county, but not a serious one," but he thinks "the labourers' cottages are not up to a reasonable standard." In the neighbouring county of Monmouth there is a considerable shortage. So there is in Herefordshire. The shortage in Worcestershire is not very serious. In Staffordshire there is a deficiency which is attributed to the competition of miners and factory hands. Warwickshire is badly off for cottages and here, too, the non-agricultural workers have ousted the farm-hands. In every district of Berkshire there is a demand for more cottages and for better ones. Of 1,040 houses examined in Oxford, 7.3 per cent. had only one bedroom, 58 per cent. had two bedrooms, 25.5 per cent. had three bedrooms, and 9 per cent. had over three bedrooms. There is a want of cottages in Leicestershire, but the state of the county does not appear to be very bad. In Nottinghamshire there is a large number of collieries, and miners pay five shillings or seven and sixpence a week for cottages that could be let to the agricultural labourers at two shillings a week. "Bad in quality and deficient in quantity" is the report of Northamptonshire. In Huntingdonshire there does not seem to be much shortage, but the accommodation is insufficient and inconvenient. The state of the rural housing in Cheshire is stated to be particularly bad



and the "condition of the cottages is denounced by the investigator with a considerable wealth of language."

Our readers will be particularly interested in what is said about stone and cob cottages. We give the references in full: "In some counties in which the supply of stone is abundant, stone cottages with slate roofs are to be found. In Derbyshire, for example, it is stated that the rural cottages are generally stone built, covered with Derby flags. In

Cornwall, too, stone built cottages are common, but in that county and in the neighbouring county of Devon, the old 'cob' cottage is still quite common, and was the characteristic cottage of that part of the world. It is said that the art of building a 'cob' has been lost. But the cob is a cheap and comfortable cottage; efforts therefore are being made to revive the cob, and the Devon Education Committee have decided to form classes with that object."

## SIR ERNEST MOIR'S SCHEME FOR LONDON HOUSING

IF the matter is considered in its broadest sense, it will be seen that there are only two methods of housing. People can either be spread out in a thin layer, or they can be housed on top of one another. The former is certainly the better of the two in general principle, but when we come to apply it to the working conditions of a vast and congested city like London, its limitations soon become apparent. No doubt, if the great population which labours in London could all be transported, as on a magic carpet, to a huge encircling belt of healthy homes in country surroundings, thus realising Thomson's lines to those

who from London's smoke and turmoil fly

To seek a purer air and brighter sky—

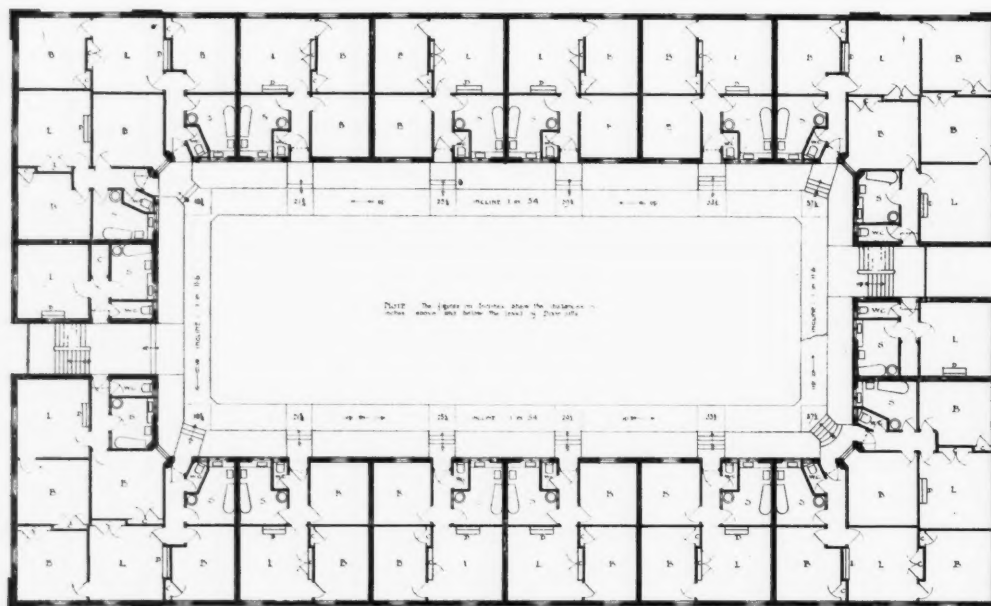
then there would be the greatest good for the greatest number. And it is because the merits of this method of housing are so apparent, and have been so much talked and written about, that the "garden city" idea has loomed so large in these

not space available here to go into the details of the scheme, but its salient features may be briefly dealt with.

Sir Ernest's idea is to substitute for a mass of slum property a group of fine blocks, so disposed in relation to one another on the site that the maximum possible amount of sunlight and fresh air is secured for each household; these blocks being dignified in architectural design and setting, adequate in accommodation, and equipped in a thoroughly modern manner. As will be seen from the perspective, the blocks are surrounded by extensive gardens and playgrounds, and in connection with these it may be noted at once that the open spaces capable of being laid out for recreation and pleasure comprise about three-fourths of the whole area absorbed in the approximate eleven acres which is the unit treated in this case.

Each block, it will be seen, is a hollow rectangle, with an opening running the whole height in each return

frontage for the purpose of securing a thorough blow-through. From wall to wall the central space measures 120ft. by 50ft. The rooms are two deep only, and thus get the utmost light and ventilation. But the most striking feature of the whole conception is the inclined way which is bracketed out from the inside walls of the central area. This path winds continuously from the bottom to the top storey, each complete circuit of the four sides making a rise of one floor. The gradient is so slight that the greatest amount of difference in height between a doorway and the path-level is 37½ ins. Such a means of travel upwards within



TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN OF ONE OF THE BLOCKS.

latter years. But all the time there are some facts which refuse to be ignored, and arising out of one of these facts is the question: If workers are to be more and more transported out of London, what is going to happen to the acres of mean streets in London? And when the question comes to be studied a little it is seen that, even with improved tram and train facilities, there are thousands and thousands of men and women who cannot afford the time nor the cost of going long distances to and from their work night and morning. This at once brings into prominence the endless poor streets where they are already housed; it raises the whole question of the slums; and forces us to consider what can be done to remedy the existing evils and to replace them by a scheme of housing that shall adequately meet the needs. It is, of course, no new problem. But to-day the matter is being forced into the very forefront of urgent reforms, and it is therefore the more interesting to study the accompanying illustrations of a scheme put forward by Sir Ernest W. Moir, Bart., M.Inst.C.E., whose wide experience in the carrying out of large undertakings will assure for it a very thoughtful and serious examination. There is

a building is not wholly novel; the path inside the old Campanile at Venice, up which Napoleon rode a horse, serves to remind us of an early example of a similar arrangement; but certainly this appears to be the first use of it in connection with a modern housing scheme. Its merit in enabling perambulators or other small domestic vehicles to be taken with ease to the upper floors is apparent, and if the comment is made that the walk round and round would become a long one for the people who lived on the upper storeys, Sir Ernest would reply that there are stairs provided for those who preferred a quicker, although more strenuous, means of ascent, and that, in any case, the time taken in walking up and down this inclined way would be far less in the majority of cases than that taken in walking from the place of employment to some station from which a train went to an area on the outskirts of London. This serves to emphasise the point that the whole scheme is intended to embody the needs of those who are bound to live near their work.

Another outstanding feature is that there are no fireplaces and no chimneys in the buildings. Heating throughout

would be by steam, radiators being placed under the windows and fresh air admitted over them into the rooms; these radiators could be protected by wire grids to prevent accidents to children, and in connection with them an adjustable pointer on a dial-plate would enable the temperature to be changed as desired. There would be a central supply also for hot water, some suitable device—such as a cistern which would fill when, say, 2d. were put into a slot—being provided for every flat.

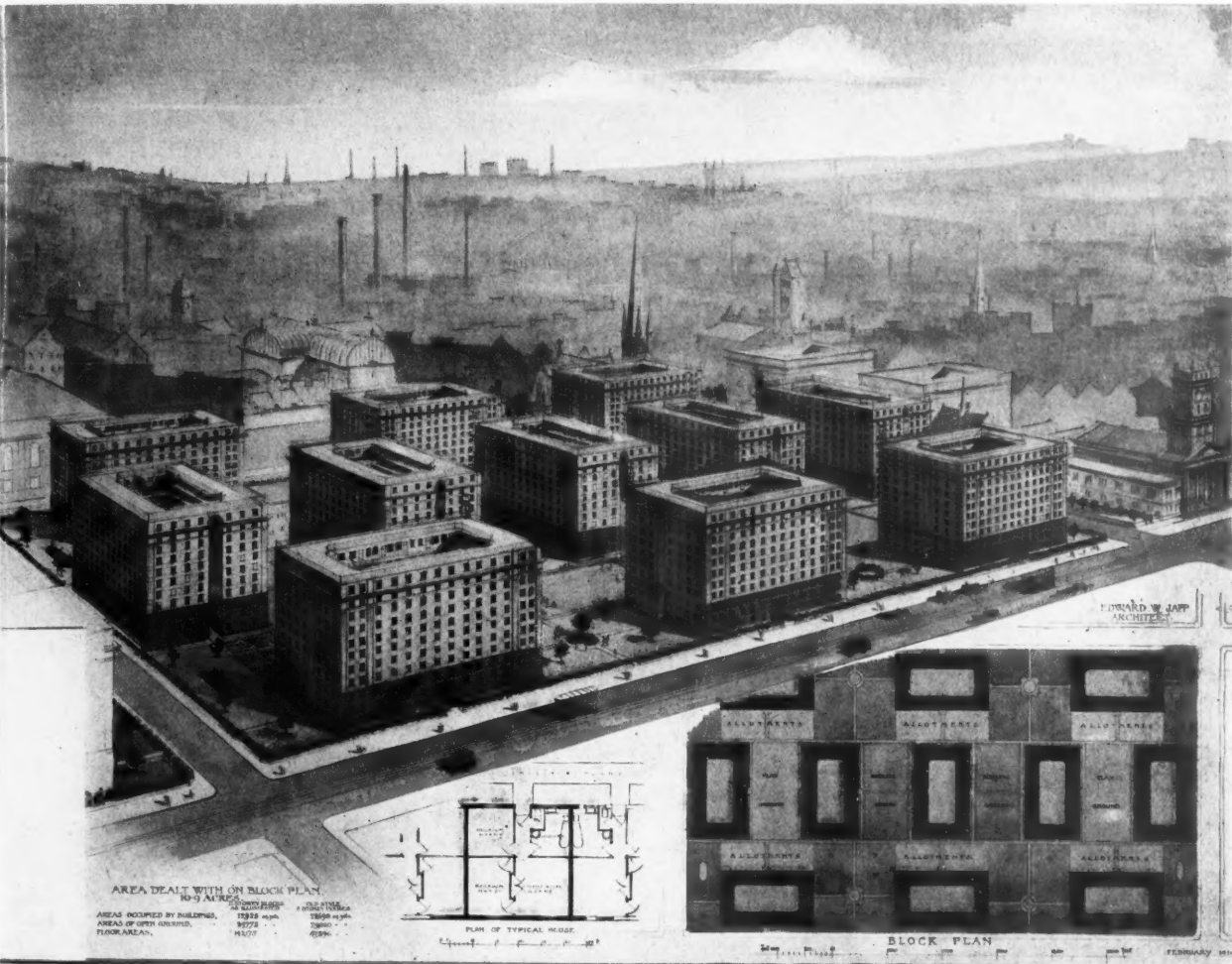
Each block would rise to about 100ft., and would accommodate about 750 persons; so that the whole group of eleven blocks would house a community of more than 8,000. The exact estimated total for the eleven blocks is 8,140, taking an average of four inhabitants for each of the 2,035 flats. There would be 185 flats in each block, every floor having sixteen four-roomed flats and two half-size flats. Most of the flats provided have a living-room 13ft. square; scullery fitted with gas cooker, gas-heated copper and covered bath; and two bedrooms, one measuring about 10ft. square, the other about 13ft. by 10ft.—such as an ordinary family would require; but the scheme also includes flats for single men or single women, for whom two rooms are considered ample. These are the “half-size flats” above referred to.

Lifts are not shown on the plan, because it is considered that they would be very undesirable in a building where there would be a large number of children; but as one of

and not because the scheme has not been worked out in detail; on the contrary, it has been most exhaustively studied, and, as indicating this, the following comparative estimate by Sir Ernest Moir may be given (the comparison being made between large blocks of flats, such as he suggests, built upon the same area of land occupied by small houses as now exist in many of the congested districts of London):

|                           |         | Blocks of flats. |           | Small houses as now existing. |           |
|---------------------------|---------|------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Total area, acres         | ..      | 10.89            | ..        | 10.89                         | ..        |
|                           | sq. ft. | 474,300          | ..        | 474,300                       | ..        |
| Distribution of area      |         | sq. ft.          | per cent. | sq. ft.                       | per cent. |
| Buildings                 | ..      | 116,325          | = 24.5    | 213,280                       | = 45      |
| Free space                | ..      | 357,975          | = 75.5    | 261,020                       | = 55      |
|                           |         | 474,300          | = 100.0   | 474,300                       | = 100     |
| Floor space, sq. ft.      | ..      | 1,279,575        | ..        | 426,560                       |           |
| Ratio                     | ..      | ..               | = 3 to 1  |                               |           |
| Number of flats or houses | ..      | 2,035 flats      | ..        | 496 houses                    |           |
| Ratio                     | ..      | ..               | = 4 to 1  |                               |           |
| Accommodating             | ..      | × 4              |           | × 6                           |           |
| Approximate inhabitants   | ..      | 8,140            | ..        | 2,976                         |           |
| Ratio                     | ..      | ..               | = 2½ to 1 |                               |           |

As to what would be the cost of this scheme, it is quite impossible to arrive at anything like a precise figure, for who



SIR ERNEST MOIR'S SCHEME FOR RE-HOUSING IN CONGESTED AREAS—"SUNSHINE IN SLUMLAND."

many possible variations in the scheme, the central block of the group might be planned as a block for men and women only, and equipped as an elevator block with fast-running lifts to the various floors, and, as a further development, bridges from this central block might span across to the blocks on either side. Still another variation might be to reduce the height of the blocks nearest the west, and to so design these in relation to the others that a graduated height for the whole group might secure a still more general enjoyment of sunshine. But these and similar points may well be left for the present. The purpose now is to give a general idea of this most interesting scheme of Sir Ernest Moir. If we do not go into detail it is on account of lack of space only,

shall say what will be the cost of building materials and labour at a time like the present, when the whole world is witnessing so mighty an upheaval? But £1,100,000 could be taken, perhaps, as a round estimate.

Such, then, in general outline, is Sir Ernest Moir's scheme, a scheme conceived on very broad lines, handled in a large manner and worked out with careful concern for the everyday realities. At a time when the merits of housing outside the area of London are being, perhaps, too insistently presented to the public eye, it recalls the fact of the existing conditions within the metropolis and points the way surely to what might be a noble manner of providing convenient homes on areas where cankerous slums now exist.

UBIQUE



# PLOUGHING WITH LARGE TEAMS

BY CAPTAIN W. H. LIVENS, D.S.O.

**N**OW that high wages and shortage of labour make it so important to get the very best results possible from the land, it has become most important to see how far economies can be effected in the old methods of working by improved means. Mr. Wayne Dinsmore has made a very interesting comparison between the horse ploughing results obtained in the different parts of the United States, and although conditions in our own country are by no means the same, owing to our small fields and different climate, there is much to be learnt from what the Americans have done. As a certain number of horses have to be kept to work a farm, the best way to use them for ploughing or for any other work is worth the most thorough consideration. Now, in the United States, the average mixed farm appears to be about 200 to 300 acres in size, and it is worked by the owner with one or two hands, and he has usually eight or ten horses. The differences between the results obtained in ploughing in different parts of the country are most astonishing. From Mr. Dinsmore's figures it appears that in the oldest farming country, New England, two horses, a ten inch plough and one acre per day was the rule.

In Pennsylvania and Ohio sulky ploughs, three horses and two to three acres was customary; in Iowa and Illinois two bottom gangs and four or five horses worked four to five and a half acres; while in Idaho, Oregon and Washington three bottom ploughs with eight and ten horses or mules were used by the better farmers, and eight to ten acres were ploughed a day. Mr. Dinsmore is very emphatic on one point. He says: "Actual experience satisfies us, however, that six, eight or ten horse hitches should be trusted only to the owner of the horses, who should be a first-class horseman, or to a son or employee who is an A1 teamster with his heart in his work. Careless, reckless employees, or boys too young to exercise discretion, should on no account be trusted with such teams."

Next to horsemanship on the part of the man entrusted with them, the most important point in using large teams successfully is to find a way of harnessing-up which will avoid cross pulling or side draught, uneven working of the horses, crowding or any of the team working on the ploughed ground. The frequent questions Mr. Dinsmore received as to what kinds of hitches were practical for large teams led him to take the matter up in June, 1918, with Professors E. A. White and J. L. Edmonds of the Illinois Experimental Station, and in collaboration with the Percheron Society of America a series of field tests were carried out to help horse-men to decide what hitches to use under various conditions. The foregoing considerations show at once that tandem hitches were the best for large teams, and eliminate some of the older types used which had four and six horses abreast.



TEN HORSES PLOUGHING EIGHT AND A HALF ACRES A DAY.

To commence with, Mr. Dinsmore obtained sketches of the hitches in Montana and on the Pacific Coast from Professor E. L. Potter of the Oregon Agricultural College; then it was decided to make extended field tests with them all, because although certain eight and ten horse hitches have been used for twenty years on the Pacific Coast, there was no proof that these were the best that could be devised, and indeed some of these hitches had many faults, such as those of the four horse abreast hitch much used with sulky single bottom and two bottom gang ploughs in Illinois and Iowa, which has the faults mentioned of crowding the horses, compelling them to pull at an angle, and creating "side draught," and, in fact, increases the pull required to draw the plough by at least a quarter.

The secret of driving these six, eight, ten and twelve horse teams is to drive the leaders only (the same method is followed in driving the twenty-six and thirty-two horse or mule teams used with the combined harvester-threshers on the Pacific Coast). The ways in which it is made possible to drive teams in this manner are by what are termed in America "tying in" and "bucking back." In Mr. Dinsmore's words:

"'Tying in' consists in tying the near horse in each pair to the hame of the off horse with an ordinary tie-strap, and tying the off horse (the furrow horse) to the draw-rod running forward to the next team. These tie-straps should be just long enough to permit the horses to move straight forward when straightened out on a pull. When correct lengths are once determined, a snap should be tied in at the proper point, so that in hitching up it is only necessary to snap it to the proper place after the neck yokes have been attached to the horses.

"'Bucking in' is done by taking a strap or rope 8ft. long, placing a snap or buckle on each end and a ring on the strap running free. The ends of this strap are snapped into the bit rings so that this strap rides the same as an ordinary check-rein, but is slightly longer. An ordinary tie-strap is snapped into the ring and then tied back to a ring welded on the draw-rod. The buck-straps should be so adjusted that the horses will work freely, but be checked whenever they are in danger of drawing the pulley chain (used in most of these hitches) back against the pulley wheel."

For those accustomed to drawings, the diagrams will make it clear that if this drawing back of the chains against the pulley blocks is not guarded against, the work of the various pairs of horses in the team will not be equal.

It will be seen also from the diagrams that the foundation for the larger hitches is a simple four-horse hitch, two pairs in tandem. This arrangement is carried out by means of a pulley which may be attached to the plough, a chain

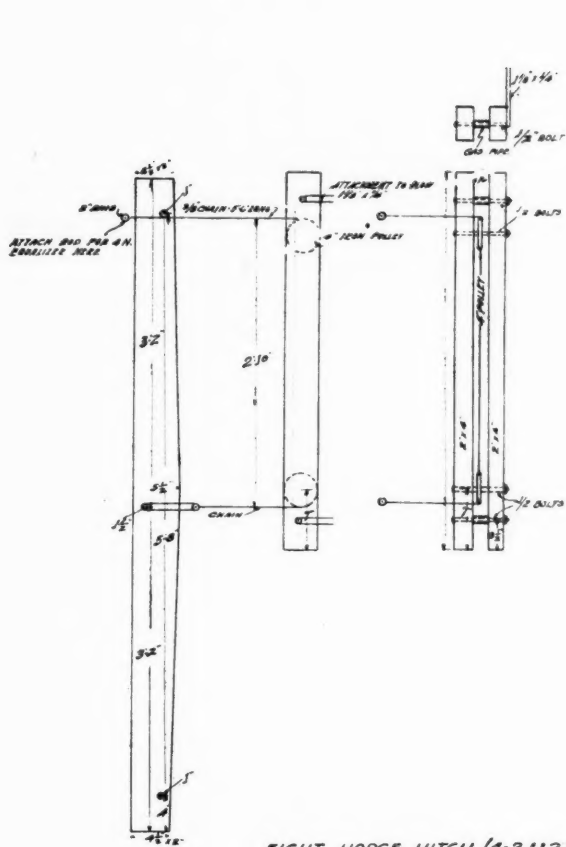
2ft. 4ins. long is passed round this pulley, and rings are fastened on each end of the chain, of such size that they cannot be dragged through the pulley. To the near-side one of these rings is fastened the traces of the wheelers, to the off-side ring a draw-rod 11ft. long (carried from the neck-yoke of the wheel team) forms the connection to take the traces of the leaders. The dimensions of the parts are as follows:

For 16in. sulky plough or 24in. gang plough, use 44in. evener and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

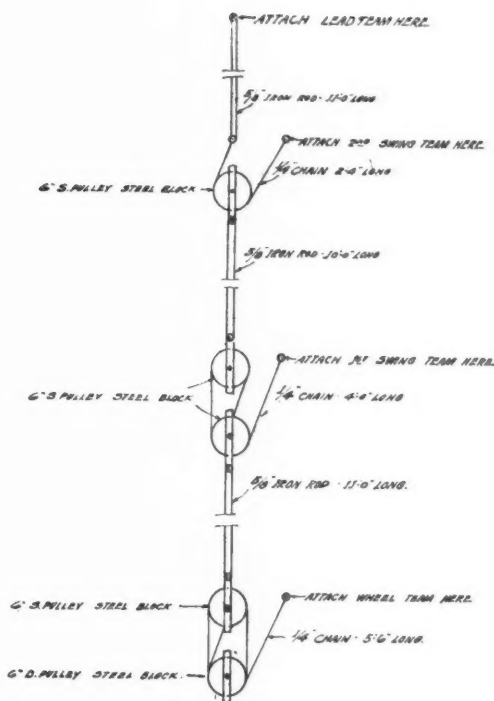
For 28in. gang plough use 50in. evener and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

From the four-horse hitch a six-horse hitch can be built up; the team are strung out as three pairs, in order to divide the pull in such a way that the wheelers only get their proper





EIGHT HORSE HITCH (4-2 & 2)



EIGHT HORSE HITCH (2-2-2 & 2)

4 & 6 HORSE HITCHES MADE BY TAKING OFF REAR UNITS

DESIGN BY E. A. WHITE.

DESIGN BY E. A. WHITE.

DIAGRAMS SHOWING TWO EIGHT-HORSE HITCHES.

one-third share of work, a four-foot chain is used, threaded through two blocks (as the diagram shows) and fastened to the back block, the free end connects to the traces of the two wheel horses, the ring at the end of the chain being large enough to prevent its being dragged through the block. The back pulley is fastened to the plough, the front block to a 11ft. draw rod carrying the pulley-block equalising the work of the front four horses, the hitch for these is the simple arrangement already described. The details for lengths of parts are:

For a 24in. gang plough use 44in. eveners and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

For a 28in. gang plough use 50in. eveners and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

AN EIGHT-HORSE HITCH.

If the six-horse hitch which has been described is taken an additional pair of horses can be worked behind the first six by the use of a block and tackle arranged so that the new wheel team have one-fourth the total pull, the arrangement

of this block and tackle is shown in diagram, the back block has two pulleys, as the chain goes twice round it, the chain is 5ft. 6ins. long, to the free end of this chain the wheel team is attached, while the front pulley is attached to an 11ft. draw rod, which carries the back pulley of the six-horse hitch at its forward end. It will be seen that the arrangement of this back block and tackle in the eight-horse hitch is such that the pull is divided in the ratio of three to one. In detail the sizes of pieces to use are:

For 36in. gang plough use 54in. eveners and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

For 42in. gang plough use 60in. eveners and 30in. or 36in. single-trees.

Although this American system of using pulley-blocks and chains for equalising the work of the team looks complicated in the description and on paper, yet really there is nothing used as complicated as the ordinary tackle used on most farms for hauling sacks up into a loft, and if these hitches are laid out on the ground, it will be seen that they are very simple to make up.



THESE EIGHT HORSES EASILY PLOUGH FIFTY ACRES A WEEK.



THE late Canon Cooper—whose name is a household word in Cuckfield, where he was the respected vicar for a long period of years—has left an abiding legacy, for which all antiquarians owe him thanks, in his "History of Cuckfield," published in the form of many papers in the

"Collections" of the Sussex Archæological Society. Cuckfield itself, its Park and the Great House, the families that have lived in the place, and the Church are all treated at considerable length in these voluminous papers, printed in Vols. XL, XLI, XLII, etc. There is also a good article by Mr.

M. A. Lower, F.S.A., on the Sergison family in Vol. XXV, with interesting illustrations.

As Canon Cooper shows, Cuckfield—originally *Cucufeld*, or "Cuckoo-field" (there is a field in the parish where cuckoos always come in the spring)—had no certain existence before the Norman Conquest. It owes its origin to the powerful Earl William de Warenne, who, as builder of the great castle of Lewes and owner of much of the land thereabouts, including Cuckfield, needed woodland handy to his Castle wherein to hunt. The situation of Cuckfield rendered it peculiarly suitable as a centre for this purpose, and no doubt a wooden hunting-lodge, and housing for the verderers and other attendants on the lord, would soon be required, and would become the nucleus of a permanent settlement or township. This would call for some provision in spiritual things, and a humble building of home-grown oak doubtless formed the eleventh century church, while a timber hall and some few huts of wattle and daub housed the Norman lord and his servants, the rangers and verderers. In the wide-stretching forest—part of the great *Andredea-weald*, little altered since the days of the Romans and Britons—there was abundance of



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CUCKFIELD PARK: THE GATE-HOUSE FROM THE DRIVE. "COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE GATE-HOUSE FROM THE COURTYARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



game—the deer, the wild boar, and fowl of various kinds, and hunting and hawking formed one of the chief concerns of daily life, affording occupation and a necessary means of livelihood to both the lord and his servants.

The church was served by the monks of the great Cluniac Priory of St. Pancras, Lewes, to whom it had been given by William de Warenne and Cundrada, his wife, the pious founders, but the need of a resident priest led to the building of a vicarage-house in 1250, and the old "Vicar's Book" of Cuckfield preserves a copy of the deed issued by the famous Richard de la Wych, Bishop of Chichester, known to history as St. Richard of Chichester. His special solicitude for

of the vicarage in 1250, but it is evident from a careful examination of the nave, arcades and tower that the work was done progressively. The massive western tower, with its beautiful trefoiled corbel-table, and battlementing of rare Early English character, was perhaps first built on to the wooden church, then the nave and south aisle were rebuilt soon afterwards. The graceful tapering shingled spire, the north aisle and chancel are additions of the early part of the fourteenth century and extensive alterations took place in the fifteenth century.

The Earls de Warenne continued to hold sway over Cuckfield throughout the twelfth, thirteenth and part of the fourteenth centuries, and there grew up under their shadow

other families of importance, who have helped to make its history. Thus by intermarriage of heiresses the Fitzalans, the Stanleys, and Nevills came into possession, and the last-named family have left their mark on the church and the place. Edward Nevill, fourth son of the Earl of Westmoreland, was created Baron Bergavenny in 1450, and the Nevills or Bergavennys seem to have lived at Cuckfield or held sway there down to 1573. A letter remains from Edward, Lord Bergavenny, to the Chaplain at Lewes, dated "at Cokefeld, 1st. Oct., 8 Edw. IV." (1467-8). The badges of the Nevills—the rose, the bull, and the crossed staples, are carved on the wooden bosses of the nave roof of Cuckfield Church, and also in the spandrels of the tie-beam against the tower.

But there is almost nothing except the name to connect the present house with these powerful families, or with mediæval England. Practically all that might tell of that phase of its existence has passed away. The church which they helped to build and enrich alone preserves a link here and there with them, and the existing house is identified rather with the Bowyers, Hendleys and Sergisons. The earlier

house we may assume to have been chiefly, if not entirely, of timber, but it was rebuilt in stone in 1574—the date upon the dining-room fireplace—and 1581, when the fine oak screen of the hall was made. Work in those days proceeded leisurely and a house of any pretensions very commonly occupied ten years in the building and fitting up. This rebuilding took place when the Bowyers were in possession, Henry Bowyer, the son of John, a wealthy "ironmaister," having acquired the park and house by purchase from Henry, fourth Lord Bergavenny, in 1564, and in 1573 a moiety of one-fourth of the manor from Henry, fourth Earl of Derby. Thus he seems



Copyright.

FROM THE GATE-HOUSE ROOF.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the spiritual welfare of Cuckfield is evinced by the appointment, as the first vicar, of his "beloved chaplain Walter de Warmtape." By this deed, while Lewes Priory was to retain the tithes of corn, hay, etc., for the support of the infirm monks, also barns and two houses, they were to pay a vicar three marks half-yearly and allow him to have the small tithes. The vicar was to be free from their control, and the patronage was to be in the hands of the Bishops of Chichester.

The church had probably been rebuilt in stone, to meet the growing importance and increased population of the little town, some twenty or thirty years earlier than the building



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THE LIME AVENUE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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FROM THE LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





THE BOUDOIR FIREPLACE.

Copyright.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

soon to have begun the re-building of the great house in the park. He died in September, 1588, not long after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and is commemorated by two monuments in the south chancel aisle of Cuckfield Church, with some elaborate heraldry wrought in marble, framed in which is a brass showing husband and wife kneeling at a double desk, *vis-à-vis*, three sons in tabards kneeling behind the father, and behind the mother two daughters. The inscription states that: "Henry Bowyer had to wyfe Elizabeth Vaux, daughter and heyr of Thomas Vaux of Kater[en Hall], Clarke Controller to King Henry the Eighth, by whom he had three sons, Thomas, Francis & Henry, and two daughters Anne & Mary." The other, upright against the east wall,

shows Henry Bowyer senior in a tabard with a shield of arms right and left of his head. The house that Henry Bowyer built was E-shaped in plan, and so remained until 1848-51, when its then owner, Mr. Sergison, enclosed the open side of the E, turning the plan into a parallelogram, with a court or well in the centre. Most of the old windows were altered at the same time, two-storeyed bow windows were introduced, conservatories were built on, chimneys and gables rebuilt, and the whole house much modernised inside and out. The entrance front, to the east, with its quaint dormers and Horsham slab roof, preserves most of the old. A historic avenue of tall lime trees leads from the high road to the house, or rather to the quaint entrance gateway of James I's reign—a relic of the days of fortified houses, when an Englishman's house was his castle. This gateway, which is of brick, partially coated with buff plaster, forms the entrance to a courtyard in front of the house, originally paved and flanked by high walls right and left, so that people arriving in coaches or carriages had to alight at the gate and ring for admission; but the walls have been removed, so that the gateway stands free, with a road on either side. It is shown on a map of the estate, still preserved in the house, which is dated 1681,

and three of the four octagon turrets that flank the central archway (in which is some charming old ironwork) appear then, as now, to have been flat-topped, with some balusters or obelisks at the angles; while the other terminates in a lead cupola and displays a clock, from which the structure takes its name of the Clockhouse. It seems to have been the custom in the Sergison family, who came into possession towards the close of the seventeenth century, to bury their dead at midnight, by torchlight, and the *corlège* would set forth from the house as the hour was tolled on the old clock. In this connection it is worth while mentioning the legend of the Doom Tree—one of the limes in the great avenue—which is supposed to lose a branch when the death of a direct

heir to the property takes place. Harrison Ainsworth, who describes Cuckfield Park under the disguise of "Rookwood," in the novel of that name, is probably the author of this legend. He says: "one tree of which, larger than all the rest—a huge piece of timber with broad spreading branches—is in some mysterious manner connected with the family of Rookwood, and immediately previous to the death of one of that line, a branch is sure to be shed from the parent stem, prognosticating his doom." This story seems to be the invention of the novelist.

Ainsworth's description of the view from the house (which in the novel is transferred to Yorkshire) is true to the facts and true to Sussex. "Below the lawn there was



Copyright.

THE HEAD OF THE STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

another terrace, commanding a lovely view of park, water, and woodland. High-hanging woods waved in the foreground, and an extensive sweep of flat Champaign country stretched out to meet a line of blue, hazy hills bounding the distant horizon." The neighbourhood, indeed, abounds in beautiful views—there is a notably fine prospect from the churchyard, which stands higher than the park—and the sylvan beauty of these views is enhanced by the little river Adur, which has one of its sources on the outskirts of the Park, in passing through which it feeds two romantically beautiful lakes, abounding in fat carp. The Park from the earliest times has been noted for its deer, whose ancestry doubtless goes back to the days when they roamed wild in the great mid-Sussex



forest, of which the Park is one of the many relics hereabouts.

To return to the House. The interior retains some good Elizabethan features, such as the oak panelling of the hall, the oak staircase, with massive newels, balusters and hand-rails, and the fine hall-screen, the best side of which is within the morning-room. There has evidently been some alteration with regard to the position and surroundings of this screen, and the present morning-room ceiling appears to have robbed it of its cornice; nevertheless, even in its present state, it is a noteworthy piece of Elizabethan joiner's work. It is divided by fluted columns with Corinthian capitals standing on square pedestals into five unequal bays, the central and outside spaces being filled with wide panels of coffered work resembling huge nail-heads, seven in height and four in width, under an elliptical arch with a sort of shell head, the centre of which is a dolphin. The two intermediate and wider bays contain segmental-arched openings with a running cusped ornament on the soffit, and filled with doors, which are later than the screen and appear to have been introduced in the eighteenth century, while the Sergisons were in occupation. Above these is a frieze of fluted work with a lion's head over each capital, and a cornice; and this supports a deep entablature, divided at intervals by caryatids answering to the columns, the interspaces being occupied by coats of arms and oval cartouches, the central one of which bearing the date 1581. The oak panelling in the dining-room was brought from Leigh Manor, an ancient house in the parish, which has been held with Cuckfield Park. The carving on the fireplace here, which bears the date 1574 in the stonework, is very fine, snails, butterflies and flowers being introduced into the festoons of the oak overmantel. There are some fine old pieces of furniture in this room—a chair, tables and presses.

In what is now the boudoir the initials H. B., for Henry Bowyer, are carved over the fireplace. There is a break in the floor here which points to the shifting of a particular wall. Indeed, the way in which the fine panelling, cornices, etc., of the different rooms have been cut about and rearranged points to wholesale alterations, both vertically and horizontally, in the formation of passages and general recasting of the internal arrangements during the long tenure of the Sergisons, or of their predecessors, the Warden family, with whom they were allied by marriage. These alterations may be assigned chiefly to the end of the seventeenth or early part of the eighteenth century, and to 1848-51, as above stated.

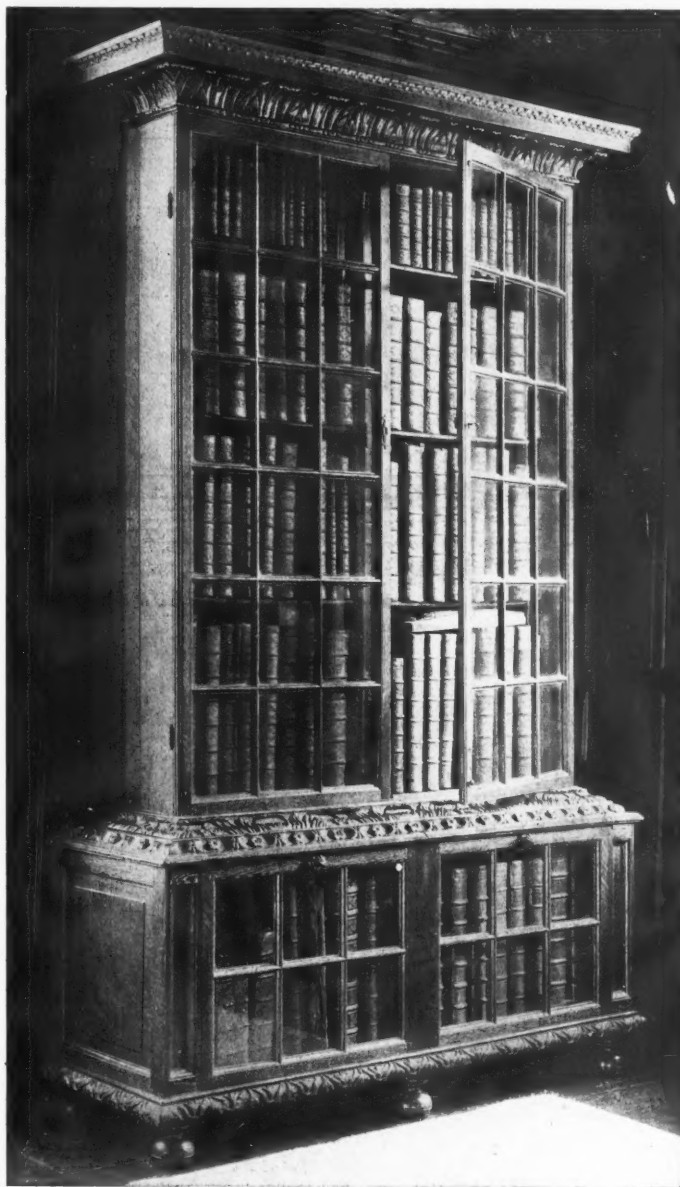
PHILIP M. JOHNSTON.

## WOMEN AND HOUSING

THE woman's side of the housing question is very convincingly expressed in the Final Report of the Women's Housing Sub-Committee, which has just been issued as a Government White Paper (Cd. 9232). This is no general dissertation, interspersed with a few well-worn complaints about lack of cupboards and the need for rounded corners in rooms, but a very thorough, detailed and definite series of recommendations, all framed with a view to improving the domestic surroundings of the working housewife. The Committee are insistent on the merits of labour-saving devices, but they are careful to point out that neither these nor convenient planning will be of much avail unless rooms are made bigger. There must be no more cramped steep stairs, small landings, inadequate third bedrooms and crowded sculleries. The parlour, too, must remain, and there must be recognition of the fact that working-class people are more and more desirous of eliminating from the living-room the dirty work of the house, particularly the cooking of meals. The Committee feel, very rightly, that every encouragement should be given to new ideas, and they discuss a number of these. They think, for instance, that much could be done in the way of central heating, and point to such modern improved devices as a combination water heater and storage cylinder, an American storage cabinet for the kitchen, washing racks, composition flooring, and many other new things; also they lay particular stress on the possibilities for a tremendous step forward when cheap electricity is available. Altogether their report is a very admirable one.



DRESSING-TABLE OR WASHING-STAND, oak, balustered legs and ovoid feet, united by straight stretchers with undulating edges. Circa 1695.



BOOKCASE, oak, with acanthus frieze, and surbase carved to match frieze, standing on globular feet. The structure of this bookcase is curiously similar to the bookcases bequeathed by Pepys to Magdalene College, Cambridge. Circa 1687.



# ENGLISH TABLES FROM 1600—1800.—III

By PERCY MACQUOID.

**A**NOTHER realistic form of gilt console introduced towards the end of the seventeenth century was an eagle "displayed" supporting the frame and top. A fine specimen of this bird is given in Fig. 19, the sense of feathers and weight-bearing action with bent knees being remarkable; unfortunately, the original frame and marble top are missing.

We now approach the type that paved the way to the gorgeous and elaborate Georgian side tables, and these for some time must have played the part of sideboards, for there is no doubt they were intended for the new parlour dining-rooms where exclusive and intimate dinners at this period took place, the marble tops affording protection against grease stains, hot dishes, and the numerous silver saucepans in which vegetables were then handed. Each course was set out in its order on the dining-table, the hosts and principal guests carving. Their appetites must have been gigantic. Below are two menus taken from the 170 menus of domestic and everyday dinners occurring at her own and friends' houses, and recorded in Lady Grisell Baillie's book marked "Bills of Fair."

August 1718 at Lord Sunderlands—4 folks at table.

Soup without anything in it  
Hog potch of bief, mutton, veall

2 COURTS

boyld sols  
fricasy chickens

3

Rest fillet bief  
puden

4  
4 patriedges  
Bottams of Raeteehocks — boyld eells  
2 young hairs  
Desert  
frut Sillibubs frut  
frut L'mon Creame frut

The other is a spring dinner of Gargantuan dimensions for apparently six people.

Diner 2 o'clock Aprill 1717 present. Duck and Duck Montrose, Lord and Lady Rothcs, Lady Grisell Baillie and her husband.

Soup  
relief cods head with alle sauce  
fricasy rabetts, naitleale, 3 boyld chickens  
boyld hame  
2nd cours

A roasted fillet of bief Larded with a rague of sweetbreads under it  
Ptansy — Crawfish — limon puden

3rd cours  
rague sweatbreads — sparagrass  
8 rost ducks

Descart  
Chestnuts ratifia creame and gellics Cheas butter  
Oranges Confections Apples  
Cheas pistoches

Tansie was a kind of sweet pudding made of eggs, bread-crumbs, leaves of strawberry, violet, spinach, and walnut tree buds, all highly spiced. In this same lady's household book of 1715 are to be found some interesting directions to the servants connected with the table. They are instructed



FIG. 19.—CONSOLE TABLE, eagle finely carved in soft wood and gilt, original top missing. The property of Mr. F. J. B. D. Wingfield Digby. Circa 1700.



FIG. 20.—CONSOLE TABLE, one of a pair, gilt, with marble top, frame supported by warrior-headed terminals and three finely carved pendent aprons, by Daniel Marot. Circa 1695. Property of Mr. T. Mango.

never to let the dirty knives, forks and spoons go out of the dining-room, but they are all to be put in the box that stands for that use under the side table. The plate must always be clean and bright, which a little wiping every day will do when once it is made perfectly clean, which must not be done by whiting, but a little soapsuds to wash it, or spirits of wine if it has got any spots, only, "wipeing and rubing with a brush and then a piece of shambo leather." These directions came from their silversmith, the celebrated Paul

termed "circular dinners," where the guests stayed on till eight o'clock supper, which was a very light meal in those days. In the "Lives of the Norths" the Duke of Newcastle is mentioned as taking an egg for supper, and for breakfast only a cup of sack with a piece of bread. Drinking, smoking and card-playing were carried to great excess. Water was evidently mistrusted and rarely drunk at meals. Even the young were accustomed to small beer from early childhood, and Locke in his papers, "Thoughts Concerning Education,"

Platel, who, it is interesting to note, charged 2s. 6d. for making a fork or spoon, plus the silver, and 1s. for engraving it. Lady Grisell also quotes prices of Devon marble as tops for her side tables at 5s. per square foot, for a large marble table £6, "for a wanesote table for 8 sitters 10s." This latter would have been of oak or walnut with twisted or balustered legs. In observing prices of this date it should always be remembered that the purchasing power of money was eight times that of the present.

It must always be taken into consideration that these dinners took place early in the day, and that even the most fashionable and dissipated kept early hours, particularly in the country where hospitality was on a lavish scale. Such dinners as those quoted above were

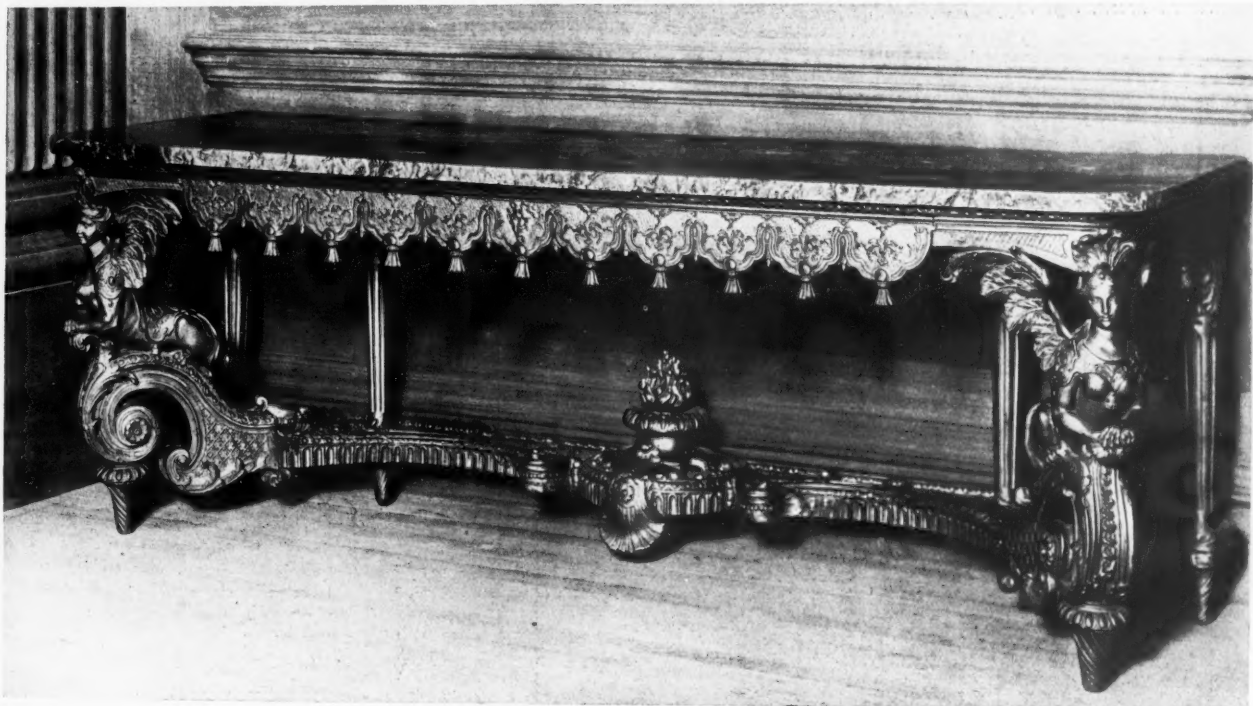


FIG. 21.—LONG SIDEBOARD TABLE, gilt, with verde antique marble top supported by winged sphinxes; a tabulated and tasseled valance faces the frame; stretcher of fine and rare design, by Daniel Marot. Circa 1692. Property of Sir Arthur Crosfield, Bart.





FIG. 22.—SMALL SIDE TABLE, gilt, marble top missing, finely carved with masks, strap-work and flowers. The tapering, pilaster legs are perforate, by Daniel Marot. Circa 1695.



FIG. 23.—SIDE TABLE, formerly gilt, with marble top, scrolled frame centring in partially concealed mask, legs capped, tapering, square and perforate. Property of the Duke of Leeds. Circa 1690.



FIG. 24.—SMALL SIDE TABLE, gilt, with carved and modelled gesso top and concave frame, pilaster legs, capped and connected by four ornate aprons, stretcher, elaborate and French in character. By Daniel Marot. Circa 1692. From Hampton Court, Leominster.

mentions that "A child's drink should be only small beer." At the accession of William III, it is stated that over twelve million barrels of beer were brewed annually to supply the wants of five million people; the richer classes drank not only beer, but sack and Rhenish wine as a "morning draft," and canary, sack, muscatel, malaga, burgundy and claret all through the day, invariably finishing the evening with punch, although the latter, owing to the cost of rum and brandy, was too costly to be popular. A very favourite evening drink among the poorer classes was hot buttered ale flavoured with cinnamon and sugar, and though the tax on beer was doubled after 1697, this appears in no way to have affected its consumption. At sea, the weekly allowance in the Navy to each seaman was seven gallons a week.

Their manners at table are reminiscent of mediaevalism, Lady Couper in her Diary, January 7th, 1715, while acknowledging a gift of food from George I, alludes to a dinner-table incident from the contemporary French Court, whose elegance was supposed to set an example. "Before I went out in the evening, I had a Present from the King of two Wild Boares Heads; one of which he had cut off, and found it so very good, that he said it was the best he had ever eat, and bade Mr. Lowman send it to me and say he had been my Taster. This I presume is a great Addition to the Present and puts me in mind of the King of France who always sups publicly and when he has a Mind to make a great Compliment to Anybody he bites a Bit of Sweetmeat with his Gums (for he has no Teeth) and sends the Residue to those he would oblige."

In a book on "Civility," translated from the French in 1703, readers were warned not to wipe the knife and fork on the bread or the cloth, but on the napkin, and a basin was placed on the sideboard in which they could be washed. Later it is mentioned that "some are so curious that they will not endure a spoon to be used in two several dishes." The reader is also enjoined not to pick his teeth at table with either knife or fork.

Figs. 23 and 26 represent two early instances of gilt side tables. Their date is definite, as the peg-topped leg commenced circa 1688, in the last years of James II. The open-work scrolled ornament to frame, legs and stretcher of Fig. 23 is more distinctly Carolean than the pattern of the other, where the lobed nulling throughout shows a tendency towards the incoming simplicity. This is still further emphasised in the next example (Fig. 25) with a blue and gold glass top, where little or no carving occurs and flat spaces are sanded to give variety to the plain surfaces of the gilding. With the advent of



Daniel Marot, who accompanied the Prince of Orange to this country, a fresh and very French feeling was introduced into the decoration of fashionable tables. Four examples are now given of this artist's work, rare specimens that embody motives from which Georgian craftsmen drew many inspirations, for Daniel Marot's scale and high finish of detail derived from his French education, helped forward in this country the more cultured system of ornament that Wren and Grinling Gibbons had started; for before the influence of these three masters had become determinate this ornament was simply a mixture of Italian and French tastes. The fine gilt console table (Fig. 20), one of a pair, was originally made for Spicworth Park, Norfolk, and is undoubtedly the work of Marot during his stay in this country from 1688 to 1702. The undulating lines of the frame, the console terminals headed by heroic busts connected by intricate twistings of scrolled foliage show the trained draughtsmanship of a Continental school, where any representation of the human form on furniture has ever surpassed that of England. Similar remarks apply to the fine and long gilt side table by the same hand (Fig. 21), where the modelling of each winged figure shows academic knowledge.

The tabulated and tasseled valance facing the frame is a characteristic Marot motive in vogue at the Court of Louis XIV, and which remained in favour here long after Marot left this country. The real originality is shown in the great serpentine sweep of the stretcher, which at each end curves upward and forward, forming scrolled console brackets for the realistic sphinxes, and centres with a finial representing a flaming lamp, the somewhat frivolous and unnecessary shell rather detracting from the fine and simple treatment of this favourite motive. In the same way the treatment of the back legs, necessitated by the great weight of the Verde Antique marble top, is poor and unconvincing. The difficult problem of weight is more successfully solved in the preceding example. Fig. 22, one of a pair, which has lost its original marble top and vase finial from the stretcher, is redolent of this French artist's style. Not only is the human mask a central feature, but this detail is repeated in the headings of the pilaster legs, which, despite their fanciful and openwork elaboration, convey a requisite feeling of strength.

The frieze decoration is a well known French motive, and the pendent apron possesses an elegance in its tabulated escutcheon and floral strappings seldom found in purely English carving. These small ornamental tables stood



FIG. 25.—SMALL TABLE, gilt, with painted glass top, convex gadrooned frame and octagon pegtop legs. The cross stretcher is looped in unusual form. Circa 1692. Property of the Duke of Manchester.



FIG. 26.—SMALL TABLE, gilt, with marble top and boldly gadrooned convex frame, legs capped, tapering and square. Circa 1690. Property of Messrs. D. L. Isaacs.

in the withdrawing-rooms and galleries of important houses, such as Kimbolton, whose owner at this time passed for a man of great taste and fashion, and whose prestige and opinion on these points were so universally acknowledged that even the redoubtable Sarah Duchess of Marlborough begged him to choose the silks and brocades for her use. A fourth example of Marot's work is Fig. 24, delightful in a rich taste, so graceful and varied that it is never redundant. It is one of a pair made for Hampton Court, Leominster, which possesses many specimens of Marot's art made for

Lord Coningsby, who, Mr. H. Avray Tipping tells us in *COUNTRY LIFE*, November 25th, 1911, was an intimate friend of William III, for whom Marot was at that time furnishing the great Hampton Court Palace. The fanciful gesso work of the top and very high quality of the original gilding, the foliated strapwork of the four aprons ingeniously forming capitals to the prettily pilastered legs, and the sudden twist in the scrolling of the undulating stretchers which support a flaming lamp are Marotesque in every motive, and all go to

form one of the most beautiful small gilt tables in this country.

The influence of Marot on our furniture has yet got to be fully appreciated. Until quite recently his works here have been regarded as foreign importations, but during the very fashionable patronage he enjoyed during his residence in this country of nearly fifteen years he largely combined his style with what he found already established, and introduced a lightness and brightness that were most beneficial.

## NATURE NOTES

### JACKDAWS AND JAYS—ARE THEY INJURIOUS?

BY WALTER E. COLLINGE.

**W**HILE a good name is better than riches, a bad one is a terrible inheritance, and of all birds of the countryside few have a worse name than the jackdaw and the jay. Yet, in spite of all their failings, neither of these birds is as black as it is painted.

Hitherto we have been content to accept the traditional opinion, and few have paused to enquire for themselves. This is unfortunate, both for the birds themselves and for mankind in general. Both are handsome species and distinctly add to the charm of country life, and if it can be shown that the sum total of their activities is beneficial rather than injurious, or only neutral, in their relations to man, then the fact cannot be too widely known.

Unfortunately, the general methods of estimating the economic position of any particular species of wild bird in this country have in the past been most unscientific and untrustworthy. If a bird was noticed at a particular season of the year to feed upon cereals or roots, fruit or young vegetables, or to destroy young game or eggs, then it was at once condemned by the farmer, fruit-grower or gamekeeper, irrespective of what the bulk of its food consisted of for the remainder of the year. Moreover, if a bird in, say, a fruit-growing district was noticed to damage or eat fruit, it was condemned, not only in that particular district, but in others where fruit-growing was unknown, and in spite of the fact that there its food was of an entirely different nature.

It will thus be seen that it is necessary to know something more about the food and feeding habits of a species, in more than one district and at various seasons of the year, before we pronounce a verdict. Further, it is all-important that we should have exact data as to the percentages of bulk of the different food items and know the ratio they hold to one another.

The subject is a much more intricate one than appears at first sight, and it is only after long experience in such work, and with a full knowledge of the economic values of the various food items, that one is able accurately and fairly to interpret their true meaning. In the light of what has been said, let us turn to a consideration of the two species of wild birds which form the subject of this article.

The jackdaw is a general favourite among bird lovers; its pertness, active movements, and general confidence in and association with man, have for ages past claimed attention. Interesting as these undoubtedly are, we must not permit them to influence our judgment; "to the solid ground of Nature" alone must we trust if we wish to arrive at the truth.

Some years ago the writer obtained a number of reports from careful observers as to the effects of this bird. We can only quote a few of them, but sufficient to illustrate the strange diversity of opinion existing on such matters.

(1) "From the farmers' standpoint this is decidedly a beneficial bird, and I should not recommend its destruction at all." (2) "Far too many of these birds, which do considerable damage to the eggs of game birds." (3) "Certainly injurious to orchards and game eggs, should welcome a considerable decrease in their numbers." (4) "Destructive to peas and grain crops, and far too numerous." (5) "Having little or no game in this district we regard the daw as a most beneficial bird." (6) "What little harm it does is fully or more than compensated for by the abundance of injurious insects (especially wireworms) that it destroys."

Archibald states: "Jackdaws eat a quantity of snails and insects, but they are very mischievous, devouring eggs, young birds, corn and fruit." (*"University of Leeds Bulletin,"* No. 11, 1910.)

Hooper remarks that it "does little injury to fruit, is partial to cherries, destroys many insects, including wireworms." (*"Journal of the Society of Arts,"* 1906, Vol. LV.)

Theobald writes: "Is a great wireworm and insect destroyer, and if it does a little injury to cherries and other fruit in dry seasons, and takes a few eggs, and now and then fowls' food, it nevertheless must be looked upon as beneficial, as far as evidence goes at present." (*"Science Progress,"* 1907.)

The late Lord Lilford, in his "Birds of Northamptonshire," writes: "This amusing but most pernicious bird is extremely

common in our county, and probably only too well known to most of our readers. In the hollow trees about the park and pleasure grounds of Lilford they used to swarm at the breeding season, till we found it absolutely necessary to wage war upon them in the interests of our garden, poultry, and game, to say nothing of those of the barn owl, a species for which we have always entertained a sincere respect and affection. The daws not only carried off numbers of young chickens, pheasants, and partridges, and committed havoc among our green peas and other vegetables, but in several instances, to our knowledge, took possession of the owls' nests, destroyed their eggs, and piled up their own nests in the cavities selected by the harmless and most useful bird of night." All of which, to our mind, only tends to show how dangerous it is to permit an otherwise most useful bird to increase to such an extent as to become injurious.

As a result of a recent investigation of the food of this species, we find that of the total amount consumed in a year 71.5 per cent. is animal food and 28.5 per cent. vegetable food. Of the former, 39.5 per cent. consists of injurious insects; 2.5 per cent. of beneficial insects; 8.5 per cent. of neutral insects; 4.5 per cent. of slugs and snails; 4.5 per cent. of millepedes, ticks, woodlice, etc.; 3.5 per cent. of earthworms; 2 per cent. of remains of eggs; 2 per cent. of remains of young birds; and 4.5 per cent. of miscellaneous animal matter of a neutral nature. The vegetable food consists of 8.5 per cent. of cereals, 2.5 per cent. of potatoes and roots, 3 per cent. of fruit, 2.5 per cent. of pheasant and fowl food, 5.5 per cent. of wild fruits and weed seeds, and 6.5 per cent. of miscellaneous vegetable matter of a neutral nature.

Summarising these figures we find that 48.5 per cent. of the food is beneficial, 23 per cent. injurious, and 28.5 per cent. neutral.

In examining these various items we note that no single one is sufficient to condemn this bird as an injurious species, and collectively the whole of the injuries only represent something under one quarter of its total bulk of food; on the other hand, 39.5 per cent. of the food is seen to consist of injurious insects, among which we may mention such pests as the cockchafer, the May bug, wireworms, the black vine weevil, larvæ of the winter moth, and various noctuid larvæ. Nearly half of the food, viz., 48.5 per cent., is of a beneficial nature.

After a careful examination and consideration of the above-mentioned items, we are unable to acquiesce in the general opinion held as regards this species, which, as we have previously pointed out, is founded upon unsatisfactory and untrustworthy evidence. The jackdaw undoubtedly does a certain amount of harm, but this is more than fully compensated for by the good it does. For the greater part of the year its food consists of injurious insects, and when we consider the number of individuals that are found in this country and realise the enormous number of insects and insect larvæ that they consume, it will surely be apparent that in spite of all its delinquencies this bird is one that the agriculturist could ill spare.

The jay is a much rarer bird than the jackdaw, and it is essentially a denizen of the woods. Its food is very varied and, as yet, we have no volumetric analysis of it for a whole year, but from an examination of the stomach contents of eighteen specimens spread over the whole of a year, we find a large quantity of cockchafer larvæ and beetle remains, slugs, snails, and earthworms, remains of two mice and of young blackbirds, also the eggs of the blackbird, a few cereals and nuts, acorns, beech nuts, grass and miscellaneous vegetable matter.

No doubt at times it takes the eggs of game birds, but it also destroys those of the blackbird and the woodpigeon. Occasionally in fruit-growing districts it damages apples, plums, and cherries, and is said to strip the pods of peas, but it also takes a large toll of injurious insects, slugs, and snails.

We regard the jay as an almost neutral factor and deprecate most strongly the incessant and relentless persecution to which it is subjected throughout the country.

Little by little we are, by improved methods and more careful and accurate observation, arriving at a more just estimate of the food of our various species of wild birds; and the bulk of the evidence tends to show "that birds as a class, notwithstanding their sins, still do more good than harm." Of the few that are really injurious, far be it from us to defend them; indeed, we should welcome any repressive measures that would tend to lessen the enormous loss to our home-grown food supply that these occasion.



#### NOTES ON BIRDS IN YEW TREES DURING THE FROSTS OF JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.

We happen to have in our garden some particularly large yew trees, with their branches sweeping the ground below. Underneath them the ground is covered with ivy, so that a splendid refuge for birds in cold weather is thus provided, more especially as the grass edging and the piece of drive just in front of them are the first to catch the sun's rays and freeze less easily than in other places.

Tits are always to be seen playing about the branches or in the ivy underneath or pecking about on the grass edge, where they are often joined by greenfinches and chaffinches, the latter being chiefly females, the former chiefly males. The great tits are far the most numerous, although there are plenty of the smaller and prettier cole, marsh and blue tits, which are occasionally joined by a nuthatch or two who have tired of "tapping" the branches of the yews; but when I hear the tapping going on I generally find it is a great tit and not a nuthatch, though they too are common in our yews.

But during the very cold weather gold-crested wrens came to us, and also, I believe, some five crested wrens in February, 1917, and I certainly saw a marsh bunting, driven by the intense cold from the famous Zoomerzet Vlat to join the redwings and thrushes that were only too glad of the shelter of our yews. The goldfinches, though fond enough of our drive, never seem to favour the yews themselves, and until the crumbs are put out we are not bothered by the innumerable house-finch (sparrows) and starlings, which soon drive away the other birds and make even the robin and the graceful hedge-sparrow feel uncomfortable! The missel-thrushes seem to be fond of the yew berries and treat us to their most unmusical notes; but the blackbirds and song thrushes in February more than make up for this, though as a rule they show themselves but little till well into February. For some reason no long-tailed tits have visited our yews this year.

J. C. E. BOYS.

#### THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

During the recent hard weather it is to be presumed that certain eagles have journeyed southwards, perhaps more than usual, since report has it that other rare raptors, especially buzzards, have been seen in larger numbers than before the war, and the writer has seen three harriers in two years as against three in the preceding thirty. This is no doubt due to the decrease in the baneful activities of gamekeepers, though possibly the heavy gunfire on the continent may have been a contributory cause. At all events, I remember being told by a gentleman living in Kent that during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 eleven buzzards were killed upon his estate. Before the war, people who wished to watch eagles were advised to betake themselves to the Carpathians, as being a more prolific hunting ground than any afforded by the Scottish glens. No doubt the advice was sound, yet I was rather staggered not long since to see in a shop window a case containing "a golden eagle from the Carpathians," the said eagle being quite unfeathered up to what is commonly called "the knee." I went in to remonstrate with the shopkeeper, the bird being an obvious harrier of sorts, but the man was in no hurry to dethrone his pseudo-royalty, insisting that it had been shot by a young officer with his revolver (from its appearance this seemed probable!), and that the slayer was quite sure of its identity. As a matter of fact, even when a slain bird is an eagle, confusion generally ensues, and it is long odds that the bird will be reported as a "golden," when it is, in fact, a "white tailed" or "sea" eagle. Inasmuch as the immature golden may have white on its tail, it may be pointed out that the only reliable distinction lies in the fact that the golden eagle is feathered right down to the toes, whereas the white tailed has the shank bare.

E. C. A.

#### CANNIBAL PIKE.

Fishing at Langold with a friend, I struck and hooked a pike which took a quantity of line before he turned. In fact, he had one or two good rushes. After the last rush I was reeling him in when suddenly he stopped and I could not move him. I said to my friend who was in the boat with me: "I'm afraid I'm snagged," thinking the pike had got entangled in an old tree or something in the water. However, after a time there was a slight movement, but he came very slowly. Telling my friend to get the gaff ready, I reeled in, and was astonished at him

saying: "There are two of 'em; big 'uns." He got a little too excited and showed himself, with the result that one of the fish released his hold of the other, which he had seized across the belly part, and the one we landed weighed 9½ lb., so what the weight of the one that escaped was I cannot say, but he was a very big one.

P. E. A.

#### CONGER HUNTING.

"The neighbouring shore (Quantoxhead) furnishes the inhabitants of the locality with an exciting and somewhat unusual sport. The receding tide leaves uncovered large slabs of stone beneath which conger eels lie hidden. The hunters force up the stones with sticks, and dogs are brought to frighten out the fish. A good 'fish dog' is held in great local repute."—*Rambles in Somerset.*

#### A CONGER HUNT.

There are some who hunt the red deer and tumble into bogs,  
Some chase the moorland foxes, and get lost amidst the fogs,  
Others there are who hunt the hare, and hope for trophies, but  
The hounds anticipate them, and they only find the scut.  
Some dig for badgers in the earth until their throats are dry,  
Some fish for visionary trout with unattractive fly,  
And some will go out ferreting and curse the little beast  
That lies up in the burrow and enjoys his rabbit feast;  
Others with guns will search the woods for doves that are not there,  
And some will go out in East winds a-fishing from the weir;  
But the queerest sort of sport of all, it really seems to me,  
Is hunting conger eels with dogs beside the Severn Sea.

F. C. G.

#### COOTS IN WINTER.

In severe weather, water-fowl have a special interest. And the winter habits of the coot are peculiarly quaint. On one of the sharpest days I came upon a flock of thirty to forty in



THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

the Kent marshes, some swimming in the open dyke up to the edge of the advancing ice, diving and plunging in their rather amateur manner, the rest marching about on the frozen banks. Finally, as I approached, they took flight and scattered over the ice, alighting very gingerly, slipping and slithering, and then standing quite still in disordered array, looking very unhappy at having been forced into such an impossible place, and quite determined that it was unsafe to try any fresh move.

Where do all these flocks of coots come from? In quite a small area of marshland I saw quite a hundred on that day, and three days later another flock a few miles away. Yet in summer hardly a pair breed there, and throughout the autumn none is to be seen with the flocks of ducks. In Romney Marsh, too, I have noticed that there are commonly more coots—there, as in these marshes, often feeding on the banks—in mid-winter, from December or January till March, than at any other time. In Norfolk, I believe, February is the month of coot-drives; and at Cambridge I have thought them most numerous in the first three months of the year. Can it be that they come westward from Holland over the North Sea, when the Dutch waters freeze them out? If so, this must be the latest regular migration of the winter, for, unlike the "weather movements" we see in this country after heavy snow, this seems to be an annual immigration. It is one of the many smaller problems of bird migration in our country that have received very little attention hitherto and have still to be solved.

H. G. ALEXANDER.



## LITERATURE.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK

*Beautiful End*, by Constance Holme. (Mills and Boon.)

THERE will live for ever in my memory a half sentence about Euston Station in one of William Black's books. I could not find it easily if I tried. I have forgotten the context, even the book. But it is to this effect: "Those to whom the mere words 'Take your seats for the North' are as music" . . . and there memory fails me.

We are so many whose secret passion is for the North. And yet among us are some few, even of North-western birth, who do not know Constance Holme's name, people born under an unlucky star, who have never come across the books which should companion them through life. But if I seem to imply that these books are "local," and therefore of less interest to the rest of the world, I am doing them and their writer a grievous wrong. The Lake Poets do not belong the less to England because they lived among our northern hills.

Nevertheless, I, who live on the borders of Constance Holme's own country, cannot help taking a vicarious pride in her attainments; which would be all very well if it did not lead me into the lowest kind of curiosity—that concerned with personalities—a vice which I once thought infinitely beneath me. I would know everything about her, and I know nothing—which, of course, "argues myself unknown." She cannot be old, for there is the dew of youth on her books. She cannot be young, for youth has not such tenderness and sympathy and breadth. My curiosity is detestable. I even try to draw conclusions about her private thoughts from words to which she gives, or does not give, capital letters. Capital letters, as suggesting hidden interests, form a science in themselves, of which I am past-mistress. But in this case I get little satisfaction and am thrown back on more obvious facts: that Constance Holme writes prose which is song, that she can describe a sheepdog trial with a poignancy that brings tears to the eyes, and that she has passed "the fourth book" test.

It has been said that everybody could write one good book (given the technical ability) because there is material and experience in every life for one masterpiece. "Born writers" can write three good books. It is generally the third that touches high-water mark. After that there is a suggestion of ebb-tide. This rule does not, of course, apply to the greatest writers of all, nor to the most "popular." (Did not John Strange Winter write sixty of equal merit?) But it applies with strange accuracy to the writers who come nearest our hearts, who are not as great as Shakespeare or as popular as—never mind! Sometimes one of them passes "the fourth book" test, then are we indeed blest. Personally I cherish "The Lonely Plough" as my best-beloved of Constance Holme's books, but I am not sure that *Beautiful End* is not the greater achievement. The writer had taught us, in her three previous books, what her capabilities are, and in some mysterious way all three seemed leading up to this. At least, I think so. But some readers do not agree with me. The amount of argument that such a quiet book can cause is extraordinary. I wish I could say, with my hand on my heart, that I have never given way to temper over it. But one *has* to argue over *Beautiful End*, though the writing is exquisite as a dream.

It is the story of an afternoon, an afternoon which holds the memories of many lifetimes, and the skill with which these memories are expressed, and shown crossing and recrossing, drawing together, parting, and influencing one another reminds one of the perfect rendering of a fugue.

Kit Sill, fiddler and dreamer, failed as a farmer and was turned out of the little marsh farm, where his people had lived a hundred years, and had to go to live with his son Bob, who had married, surely, the most evil woman in fiction. Then, after two years, Kit's one successful son, Thomas, takes the little farm, *Beautiful End*, again, and he and his young wife, Agnes, send for Kit to come home.

During the awful two years spent by the old man with the sinister Marget and her horrible children in the dirty little house where it was never safe to put a hand into a drawer "for fear of upright needles or relics of bacon fat," where the pots and pans were never clean and where the kettle "poured boiled cockroaches from its spout," he had been dreaming of home, waking dreams that came at will.

He had been able to see the marsh when he chose, the broad, flat stretches and the clean soft lines. . . . There was always sun for him

when he thought of the marsh, the early-evening sun on road and field. It lay in a great, golden sheet, unbroken as always on a western marsh, stretching out to the far line of the sea. . . .

Even on the days when he went into the house he did not always go upstairs, because it meant going too near the dividing line of which he was afraid. More often, he sauntered through the rooms below, into the sudden whiteness of the dairy or the still little parlour shut like a Sabbath book. . . . Things changed about the house to match his memories as they came, but they never passed beyond a certain point, and every one of them was mellow and sweet with time. Looking back he saw nothing that struck him as being new. It was all much too beautiful for that.

But the day came when these dreams were to become reality. Kit went back to the little marsh farm. "I'd not change to the marsh if I were dead and rize!" he said.

Now here it is that I shall fail, for I must make my points too rapidly, whereas Constance Holme touches each little disillusionment so softly and pitifully that one almost holds one's breath, not knowing whether they or the love and care of Thomas and Agnes will turn the scales.

The tidy, newly painted gate jarred on the tired old man.

He felt coldly angry with the four-ruled thing, swinging so neatly on its stoup. He was accustomed to broken and jagged and hanging bars, made lovely in velvet greens by the brushes of wind and rain. Always, on coming home, he had seen the house through the bars, the painted colours of home through the ancient mellow frame. . . . But it was not possible to look at the house through this soulless square, cutting the scene like a knife with its hard blue lines. . . .

But everything was changed, like the gate—changed just a little for the better. "Now Kit was beginning to see what he had done—how he had wandered into another's dream of home." With the uncertain memory of old age, he had never realised the sale of the old furniture and china, and every unfamiliar detail gave him a fresh little shock before he could pull himself together.

Agnes had prepared such a tea as he had not seen for years.

Kit said the ham was grand, as he had said of the cup and the smug, terrible chair that was waiting for him to die.

But he made no attempt to eat it.

"Where's t'laylock?" he asked suddenly, staring through the porch. "You've never hagged down yon laylock as used to be by the door?"

"Nay, not I," Thomas said, with honest regret. "'Twas wind as took it—yon gale we had in March. . . . I'm sorry about laylock, but there's a new seat down by t'ledge. You'll find it rarely snug, if you want to be setting out."

Kit looked through the window at the neat new object of painted boards, set where the light from the west would trouble and dazzle his eyes. The seat by the lilac had been turned away from the west, so that he might rest his eyes on the evening peace of the fields. . . . Worst of all, the new seat was painted the same colour as the meadow gate, that terrible hard blue that was like a blow. It was horrible what things you could do with a pot of paint. . . . "Ay, it's snug," he said very politely.

His distressed son and daughter-in-law, feeling that their carefully prepared surprises had missed their effect, tried to comfort the old man by asking for "a tune." I have said little of the fiddle, but it sings through the whole book.

He lifted his bow on high and the atmosphere tightened like a string. It was like waiting for the striking of a flame, the first touch of lips, or the dead coming out of a grave. All the grace of youth was in the curve of his arm; the certainty of knowledge in his thrilling finger-tips. . . . And then slowly, as the note still hung in the balance, his face chilled and changed. The music had gone with the dream.

The music could only live where the dream lived, and he had left it behind. . . . Comfort, position, peace in his last days—all must go into the fire to serve the fine flame of his dream. He was only a vague old man who had made a muddle of life, but firmly and fightingly he was sure of that.

So Kit went back to Marget.

It was over this point that argument waxed long and furious. The one who spoke the most showed us the precise point at which Kit might have been won over to settle at the marsh farm. She told us exactly what she would have said and done if she had been Agnes. But at the moment she had not quite finished reading the book, and when she did come to the end she was very much subdued and said, "Yes, it was inevitable."

I said: "I cannot bear Kit's going back to Marget. Nothing shall ever induce me to read the book again." But I broke my word within a fortnight and shall go on breaking it as long as I live.

Listen:

All the days that had found him on that road were present with him to-night:—golden days, such as this, and the quiet grey days that seemed

scarcely to draw a breath from dawn to dusk. On those days the whole world was grey, not as if hidden by a veil, but grey-washed by a broad yet feathery brush. Wet days, many and long, when the rain blowing in from the sea was as level as the sun; mornings, fiercely cold, with the north wind dropping straight from the high snows; evenings, drenched with mist and haunted by pale sheaves, peering over the road at the lapping tide. Moons world without end he had seen stand over the marsh, the first moon of the year, light and thin as the edge of a tossed coin, to the great harvest moon that was not like an English moon at all. There was something in the nature of Divine revelation about the moon that came with the sheaves, a touch of the mystical meaning that shone so plain from the Bethlehem Star.

Spring, with a wail beside that of the curlew in the air, and lambs like new flowers all over the coloured carpet by the sea.

There was a summer tide that he wanted to see, too, a full blue tide with a ripple all over its face, breaking in long, crisp waves along the sand. This tide was the most human tide of all, a live beautiful thing that you could almost clasp. . . . The waves, where they broke on the sand, were like slender bars of amethyst crested with snow. . . . But the tide that was coming out of that quiet west would never break; it would barely even lip at sand or wall. Hardly the wisest would know the moment when the deep sea sent it out. . . . It would not even whisper when it rounded the

point, and scarcely a line would come on the sand to show that it was there. A sleeping water, shallow and very smooth, it would steal and spread like the shadow of a cloud. Without fear and without hurry it would come like the light that spreads before the sun has topped the hill. If the moon came up, there would be a golden glass where there had just been sand; but if there was no moon, only the river would know about the tide.

But to tear these passages from the book is like tearing a beautiful flower petal from petal.

Alas, alas! who am I to pull such loveliness to pieces?

ISABEL BUTCHART.

**Simpson of Snell's.** by William Hewlett. (Skeffington, 6s. 9d.)

IT appears in Mr. William Hewlett's book, "Simpson of Snell's," that he is trying to reconcile the nobility and the sordidness of life. The story is of the days of Simpson's early manhood, that time of warm ideals and terribly generous foolishness in a kind nature. The development of the Man Simpson from the mere germ hidden in a vulgar young clerk necessarily takes place in an atmosphere terribly sordid. Yet here is a human appeal from the whole world of such young creatures for some decent ideal to follow, that the natural beauty and poetry of their natures be not overlaid with mere struggling for necessities and lost from disuse and neglect.

## THE ESTATE MARKET

### LORD ABERDEEN'S LAND.

SINCE the preliminary announcement in these columns last week of the intention of the Marquess of Aberdeen to dispose of the greater part of his Haddo House Estate, Aberdeenshire, the arrangements to that end have been materially advanced. It will be remembered that, in accordance with his lordship's letter to his tenantry, which was commented upon in COUNTRY LIFE a week ago, the fullest possible consideration is to be extended to the sitting tenants so that they may not be dispossessed of their holdings, and the negotiations for this purpose have been entrusted to the Hon. Charles Scott, a nephew of Lord Aberdeen, and member of the firm of Messrs. Castiglione and Scott, of Edinburgh and London.

The proposed sale is of exceptional importance, alike in respect of the area involved, approximately 50,000 acres, and its value from an agricultural, residential and sporting standpoint. It embraces five parishes in the centre of Aberdeenshire, and extends roughly some fifteen miles in length with a breadth of eleven miles, almost entirely arable of great fertility, and the rental exceeds £28,000 a year. The 50,000 acres include the lands north of the River Ythan, as well as a large area towards Meldrum and Fyvie, and the Udy lands with some 660 large and small holdings, and as the population on the portion now in the market is between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants, a number of churches, schools and villages.

It is obvious that the fact that there are on the estate various residential properties, some of them of quite an important character in themselves, and all having considerable interest, may result in offers being made for the purchase of large portions in their entirety, and in that event the "break-up" of the estate will not be so thorough as the preliminary notification of the sale has led the public to expect. Among the residences on the estate is the House of Chivas, which has been renovated and where Lord and Lady Haddo have for some years resided. This is included in the sale. Like Gight, it is an old castle that has for a long period been in the possession of the vendor's family. The sporting is good, the low ground shooting and the salmon and trout fishing being of a noteworthy order. The auction of the estate by Messrs. Castiglione and Scott promises to be one of the principal events of the coming season.

Elsewhere in Scotland also, as the detailed references in these columns recently to the approaching sales by the Duke of Sutherland, Mrs. McAdam and Mr. W. E. Gilmour have shown, estates of great extent and exceptional value—either as mainly sporting and residential, or as combining those qualities with an appreciable agricultural element—are in the market. In at least two instances the dates of the auction have been fixed for the end of April, while in a third, June is named as the probable time of sale. Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley have the conduct of the three auctions just mentioned, and the first in order of date is that of 28,500 acres on Mrs. McAdam's estate in Ayrshire and Kirkcudbrightshire, Craigengillan, to be exposed to public roup at Ayr on April 24th and April 25th. The second in the same order is that of the Duke of Sutherland's Cambusmore and other estates, to the extent of nearly 115,000 acres, at Hanover Square on April 25th.

To a McAdam of Craigengillan belongs the distinction of having given Burns some encouragement, which the poet acknowledged in one of his numerous "epistles," that "on receiving an obliging letter from Mr. McAdam of Craigengillan":

Sir, o'er a gill I gat your card,  
I trow it made me proud;  
"See wha tak's notice o' the bard!"  
I lap and cry fu' loud.

Now de'il-ma-care about their jaw,  
The senseless, gawky million;  
I'll cock my nose aboon them a'—  
I'm roosed by Craigengillan.

Camlarg shooting lodge and twenty sheep and other farms with many small holdings in and near Dalmellington are included in the auction at Ayr, and the fishing and shooting are of the best.

But from a sporting point of view there is of course nothing to surpass the Sutherland properties, which yield an abundance of all that is to be had

in that way in the Northern Highlands—grouse shooting, salmon and trout fishing and deer stalking. The streams and lochs are all well stocked, and each of the divisions to be sold has an extensive grouse moor, while Loch Shin, the largest of the lochs on the property, skirts its western boundary for fully eleven miles. Dornoch Castle is situated on the Dornoch division of the estate, and the lodges have all been built with an eye not only to their command of the surrounding scenery but also their being as much sheltered as possible. Burra Islands and 140,000 acres in Ross and Sutherland, belonging to Mr. W. E. Gilmour, are coming under the hammer at an early date.

The Countess of Portsmouth is about to dispose of Guisachan, her Inverness-shire estate of 22,000 acres, of which all but about 2,000 acres are deer forest. The estate yields from forty-five to fifty stags and about the same number of hinds every year, and as many as twelve roe deer are often killed in a single day's sport. The mansion is comfortable and stands in a position of singular beauty. Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley will offer it for sale in the summer.

Sir William H. Ingilby's sale of part of the Dacre estate, by Messrs. Mabbett and Edge, will include 2,150 acres of agricultural land a few miles from Ripon, much of it in the valley of the Nidd. Preliminary notice is also given of another Yorkshire sale, that of 4,750 acres on the Consett estates, between Northallerton and Thirsk. Messrs. Duncan B. Gray and Partners are the agents. There are forty farms, 200 acres of woodlands, the house, known as Crosby Court, and other properties, of a total rental value of well over £5,000 a year. The Middlesmoor sporting estates in the West Riding, near Pateley Bridge, including 3,380 acres of grouse moors, a number of farms, all let to good tenants, the house, Harefield, and a total area of over 4,500 acres, will come under the hammer of Messrs. Hepper and Sons and Messrs. Hollis and Webb, at Leeds next month.

Two landed properties on the outskirts of London are to be submitted to public competition in the next week or two. The Hyde estate, near Harpenden and Luton, 1,135 acres, is to be offered at St. Albans on Wednesday next, March 19th, by Messrs. May and Rowden, in conjunction with Messrs. Rumball and Edwards. Possession of the mansion, which stands in the midst of a park of 170 acres, about 450ft. above sea level, may be had immediately. The former firm is also concerned, jointly with Messrs. Robert W. Fuller, Moon and Fuller, in the sale of about 250 acres of the outlying portions of the Addington estate, Croydon. This will take place in the City on April 10th.

Lieutenant G. A. N. Balderson has bought Coldharbour Farm, Stadhampston, 85 acres, for £4,450, at an auction by Messrs. Franklin and Gale at Oxford. Southwood, a freehold of four acres, near the Harpsden Golf Links, at Henley-on-Thames, has been sold by Messrs. Nicholas. Private sales by Messrs. Harrods (Ltd.) include Kirkley, Lingfield, Forest House and six acres at East Liss, and the old fashioned house and 16 acres known as Pirbright, Chipstead.

A good many seaside properties are coming into the market at moderate prices, and it is satisfactory to observe that sales are being effected. Two school buildings in the Isle of Thanet are shortly to be dealt with in the rostrum by Messrs. Ventom, Cooper and Co. Possession is offered of that at Ramsgate, known as Chatham House School, with grounds of over three acres. It was taken over by the military authorities in 1914, but is to be vacated. A Margate freehold, of about the same acreage, Montrose at Northdown, built in 1902, was carried on as a girls' school until the outbreak of the war.

Some excellent residences in and around Bournemouth await offers. One at Parkstone, commanding extensive views across Poole Harbour to Corfe Castle and the Purbeck Hills, is to be sold on April 11th by Messrs. Hampton and Sons, jointly with Messrs. James and Sons. Redlands, with ten acres, in Western Road, Branksome Park, and Roxburgh, Marlborough Road, West Cliff, with grounds of nearly an acre, the latter property with possession, are in Messrs. Rebbeck Brothers' hands for early realisation. Every visitor to Hove knows Brunswick Terrace, a group of residences worthy of their commanding position on the sea front. The freehold of No. 26 will come under the hammer of Messrs. Hampton and Sons at Winchester House on Tuesday week (Lady Day). Sir Ernest Cable's house, near Teignmouth, is for sale locally, on Thursday next (March 20th), by Messrs. Robert Frost and Son. The house, originally named Treverven and now known as Everest, stands in pretty grounds of ten acres, and has a fine view of the sea. ARBITER.



# CORRESPONDENCE

## COTTAGES NEW AND OLD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with interest the correspondence in your paper on the subject of the building of cottages in present conditions. May I be allowed to raise a few points, as one desiring information? Living on the clays of the Midlands, where in normal times brick is the only available building material, I am led to ask whether such clays can be utilised in the manner described in Mr. Skipper's letter in your issue of February 15 as being common in East Anglia. I can recollect in my childhood the existence of one-storey "mud" cottages, built for the most part by squatters on the roadside waste, and I can recollect a two-storey "mud" cottage. These were all thatched. The "mud," which presumably had a large admixture of clay and in some cases, at least, contained pebbles, appeared to be fairly homogeneous. Presumably it was a similar material that was used for filling the panels of timber-framed houses before bricks were common. With regard to the building of new cottages under the scheme for rehousing, there can hardly be a more appalling prospect than the dumping into a rural village of a number of houses of some "sealed pattern" based on a town design and lacking all touch with local habits and style. Even with a sympathetic architect it would be difficult to avoid the effect of transitory fashion or fancy. Local surroundings will require much more attention than they seem likely to receive. A specially difficult problem is presented in rural villages (I have in my mind one such) where there are many old two-storied cottages of the seventeenth century, thatched, with timber framing, the panels filled with brick or "dab." These are altogether delightful to look at; but their rooms are low and their windows tiny, and they are not tolerable if judged by the standards of to-day, even where their condition is good. It would be a thousand pities to destroy them, yet it is indeed difficult to preserve them. The most promising scheme in most cases would, I think, be to build out at the back a two-roomed or three-roomed extension conforming to modern conditions, leaving the original cottage to supplement the principal rooms. Since, in my experience, it takes, so far as area goes, at least two old cottages to make one modern one, such a scheme is not so extravagant as it might appear. Can any of your readers throw further light on the problem of maintaining such old cottages as habitable dwellings? The timber-framed house offers another problem. Its walls are never of a thickness greater than that of a single brick, and consequently, at the best, it tends to make a cold house, if not a damp one. The framing gradually warps, and the filling of the panels often loosens. I am anxious to know whether it would be possible in some cases to substitute reinforced concrete for the existing filling of the panels. This would be both cheaper and drier than the brick or mud, and would preserve the general appearance. My other question is whether it would be possible to add gins, or gins, of concrete to the inside of a timber-framed wall, and to get such a lining bound in with the framing and its brick or other filling. This would make the wall stronger and the house warmer and drier. Can any reader of experience answer these questions or tell me if anything has been published on the subject? The preservation of old and picturesque village dwellings is of great importance, but the problem is a difficult one. It is surely not insoluble.—C.

[As the "clays of the Midlands" only avail for "bricks," we fear they may not be suitable for clay lumps, which are best made from the white clay, a purer clay than that used for brickmaking. But clays vary very much, and it might well be worth trying whether "lumps" can be satisfactorily made. Men who have been practical brickmakers all their lives are themselves now experimenting with their clay with a view to producing clay lumps. While we are generally in fullest sympathy with our correspondent's views on old cottages, we feel sure he must be mistaken in thinking reinforced or even common concrete is cheaper and drier than "brick or mud." By "mud" we presume he means "clay." Clay is not only the cheapest building material, but it also is certainly the driest. People seem far more unthoughtful about clay than about most things. Why do we surround the outside of our biggest and most scientifically built reservoirs with clay? To keep the water in: for this purpose clay is more reliable than concrete. The material that keeps water in will also keep water out. It is a mistake to think, as a man said to us yesterday, that built in a wall clay turns soft and runs down under the heaviest driving rains: it simply absorbs a little water on the surface, which speedily dries out again, and the surface gets as hard as ever. But a clay wall must not stand in water, hence the brickwork base with a damp course; and hence failure in old clay lump walls, because in many an old house there is no damp course in the brick base. We moderns often make our damp courses of slate, but what is slate except a comparatively pure clay that has been under long and heavy compression?—Ed.]

## WINDMILLS FOR ELECTRICITY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A good many years ago, in the late 'eighties or early 'nineties, a description appeared in one of your contemporaries of a windmill set up on the top of a large warehouse in London for the purpose of generating electricity. As far as I can recollect, plans drawn to scale were given, as well as other illustrations. The whole thing was a complete success, and sacks were raised to the top storey by electric power, and the place was also lighted, the sole power used for generation being the dynamo worked by the windmill. Eventually, as it was deemed a sky sign, and therefore illegal, the mill had to be taken down. I cut out the description and illustrations and pasted them in a scrapbook, but I cannot now find this book. As coal and its products are now so very expensive and scarce, also the supply itself problematical owing to labour troubles, would it not be a solution to build windmills all over the country, also to use water mills which could be installed in hundreds of rivers and streams, under State regulation and ownership, and so supply electricity for heating, cooking and lighting to every town, village and home in the United Kingdom? Oil stoves and

lamps could be kept as a standby in case of the electric supply temporarily failing. We should thus be independent of coal and strikes.—A SOLUTION.

## A NEW USE FOR CHURCHES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Two of the many difficult problems that are confronting us at the present moment are (1) how to provide amusement for the people in remote country villages, and (2) how to get them to go to church. To begin with the first. If one wants to amuse people one must have a place to do it in, and the villages that have any sort of hall or recreation room are still very much in the minority, and at the present cost of building are likely to remain so. Our own case is a representative one. My husband is a poor landlord and cannot afford to do more than keep his tenants' roofs watertight and their farm buildings in repair. He has given me a most suitable piece of land for a village hall, and before the war I had collected enough money to make a very substantial start towards the price of building one, but of course it would go nowhere now. The people about here love dances, whist drives, theatricals, concerts and also more solid entertainments, such as lectures and debates of various sorts; "A Dickens Lecture and Reading"; "Pond Life," illustrated by magic lantern slides; "A Debate on the War," with personal experiences related by a Red Cross nurse, a returned prisoner and a young officer from a destroyer; "Wild Animal Life of the Neighbourhood"; "Early History" of the same. These are a few of the subjects of our weekly meetings, and the attendance in our little schoolroom is splendid—there are generally people sitting in rows on the window-sills! If they want to dance, the only floor we have is that of the same schoolroom, worn into hollows by generations of little hob-nailed boots. A concert or theatricals present still more difficulty on account of the stage. It is much to the credit of our kind schoolmaster that he does all in his power to encourage these social gatherings, for the preparations before them, and the clearing up after them, entail a good deal of trouble and discomfort in the school, and in addition it often means that he and his wife are kept awake until the small hours of the morning by the unavoidable noises of dances or whist drives, as their house forms part of the school buildings. I write to suggest a remedy for the first difficulty, which might perhaps go some way towards solving the second. Why not use our churches as places of amusement? The chancel could be cut off altogether by a curtain, which, incidentally, would form a good background for a magic lantern sheet. Pews could be replaced by chairs, which could be easily moved away for a dance. Organ recitals and concerts could be arranged with the greatest ease. I do not myself believe that any wrong use would ever be made of this privilege, which, of course, would be supervised by the responsible members of the parish. It would bring the clergy more into the lives of the people; it would make the people feel that the church was the centre not only of one part of their lives but of the whole; and it would obviate the expense—a very great one in a poor parish—of two buildings to warm, light and keep clean and in good repair. This is already done in Government buildings—notably in the Army, where one building serves for the worship of all denominations in turn on Sundays and for school, lecture-room and amusement hall on week-day.—A COUNTRY SQUIRE'S WIFE.

## THE DIET OF BIRDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in the excellent diagrams illustrative of the food of various birds which appeared in your issue of February 22nd, and I should like to suggest that similar diagrams should be prepared by some recognised authority on the food of all sorts of birds that are supposed to be injurious to crops, so that the good could be put against the harm and they should not be condemned straight away, as is the case now. For one thing, respecting the diet of woodpigeons which are popularly supposed to be so destructive, I found last summer by examination of their crops that they were feeding on the oak moth caterpillars and nothing else, and the crop of another that I opened last week was full of weed seeds only. These birds had, of course, only been doing good. I would also suggest that these examinations should take place at all months of the year, omitting certain periods. For instance, a pigeon whose crop was full of corn after the harvest was got in could not possibly have been doing harm, as it would be simply waste corn from the stubbles. With regard to a remark of your correspondent in his article on March 1st on the buzzard that he had seen two nailed to a gate in Cumberland, I should like to call attention to the fact that the buzzard is protected in that county, and whoever killed them was liable to a prosecution.—FAIR PLAY TO THE BIRDS.

## THE WINCHESTER MEMORIAL ICONOCLASM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The fiat has gone forth and, in spite of a very modest majority, the Committee have decided to carry out their grandiose scheme. Is it too late even at the eleventh hour to protest against the proposals? The Committee lament that no alternative has been proposed, but surely it does not surpass the wit of man to devise a memorial that should honour the dead without destroying the charm that surrounds the old school. It is obvious that a Committee all moved by the same spirit, having discarded recalcitrant members, and wedded to one idea and one architect, is not the most likely body to evolve another plan, but among the many who are opposed to the present scheme it might surely be possible to find someone who could devise a more modest one. The present suggestions savour too much of advertisement of the living and too little of memory of the dead. No other school has planned a memorial of such magnitude, and it seems to me that the promoters have lost all sense of proportion in desiring to advertise Winchester instead of erecting a monument that would achieve what one thought was the real motive—to honour the dead and make present and future generations live up to traditions of a great Public School.—AN OLD WYKEHAMIST.

## A RECORD BUNCH OF ORANGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In view of the photograph under above heading in a recent number of COUNTRY LIFE, the enclosed may be of interest.



A BUNCH OF FOURTEEN ORANGES.

stakes and scrub crossing many of the New Zealand rivers, while at the apex was fixed a netted basket arrangement in which the eels were trapped. I think this is all the more interesting as the Maori is supposed to have originally come from the hill country of India. My mother used to tell a story of the most muscular bishop New Zealand ever possessed, Bishop Selwyn, who declared he could sleep comfortably upon anything, and had only once been unable to sleep, and that was when going down the Lower Waikato River in a canoe half full of eels. The eels would wriggle so much that he really could not sleep when lying upon them! The peat swamps of New Zealand are literally alive with huge blue eels, and the Maories simply dig a hole and wait for the eels to make their way into the cavity when it fills with water. Eels are also obtained by plunging a sharp-pointed spear among the reeds and water weed that cover the more marshy swamps. The barbs of the spear prevent the eels wriggling off when pierced by the spear. But I think that the river wedge was the method most frequently used, as the catch of eels was larger and required less exertion. The colonists very rarely used the eels as food.—H. T. C.

## WHERE TO LIVE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you allow me a little space to support the suggestion of "Columbus" that you should open your correspondence column to a discussion on this subject? It would be difficult to improve on the concise and forcible manner in which "Columbus" has stated the case of hundreds of people in this country who, before the war, had retired upon a small capital, upon the income from which they depend for their support in their declining years. Owing to the war these people now find their available incomes reduced by 50 per cent., to 60 per cent., and can no longer face the future without grave anxiety. In addition there can be no doubt that Labour will, upon its accession to power, which is inevitable within the next few years, bleed the small capitalist white. It is already deeply committed to a policy of

The branch, which I photographed immediately on arrival here, was brought from Spain by a Spanish ship's captain about twelve years ago, and bore fourteen oranges of an average size. Twelve can easily be counted; another just shows below the second orange from the top on the left, while a very small portion of the fourteenth can be seen, half hidden by a leaf, at the very top, below the fork.—GEO. C. NICKELS.

## EEL FISHING BY MAORIES IN NEW ZEALAND.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The photograph of a fishing weir in Assam and Bengal is particularly interesting to me. I remember in my childhood frequently seeing the same wedges of

confiscation. In these circumstances many small capitalists who are unable to re-enter their former business or profession are anxious to transfer themselves and their capital, while it is comparatively intact, to some country where they will not be ground to powder between the upper and nether millstones of taxation and Socialism. I believe that information of vital importance to many such persons might be elicited by such a discussion as "Columbus" suggests. To the particulars already mentioned by him as desirable I would add the average taxation and the average rate of interest earned by first-class investments in the country recommended.—"RETIRED."

## THE CUTTY STOOL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In a recent number of your journal there was an article on the Cutty Stool or the Stool of Repentance. One of the pictures, I believe, was picked up in Yorkshire. It is not generally known that the cutty stool was an English as well as a Scottish institution. One of the most curious instances of its use is that in regard to Aunty Suff's mother. Aunty Suff is the subject of a very striking pen-portrait by Lord Cockburn. She could shoe a horse, swear like a trooper, and had a voice like a man. But Lord Cockburn says that, although "her dress was always the same—a man's hat when out of doors and generally when within, a cloth covering exactly like a man's great-coat, buttoned closely from the chin to the ground, worsted stockings, strong shoes with strong brass clasps," she sat "in any drawing-room, and at any table, amid all the fashion and aristocracy of the land, respected and liked." She was the daughter of Robert Johnston of Hilton by his servant Mary Fulton, whom he afterwards married. Mary was had up at the church in Carham, in Northumberland, in her penitential habit, that is to say, bareheaded, barefooted and barelegged, and a rod in her hand, and "standing upon some form or other high place so as the whole congregation may see her immediately after the Nicene Creed." Carham is a church on the southern side of the Tweed, and this historic case stands as proof that the cutty stool was not altogether a Scottish institution.—X.

## PAY-DAY.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—These two photographs, taken on pay-day in the Sepoy lines of an Indian infantry regiment, may interest your readers. In the Indian Army payment is made monthly, each company being paid by its pay havildar. An Indian and a British officer are always present, the latter listening to any complaints made to him by men whose pay has been cut. No. 1 shows the pay havildar (sergeant) and his assistant at work under the fig trees on a regimental parade ground in a big cantonment of

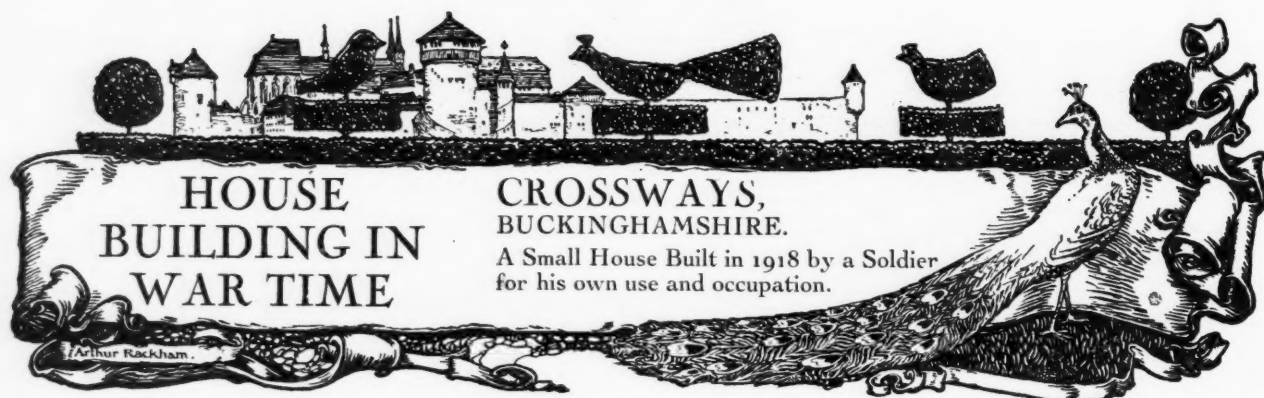
## PICTURESQUE BEGGARS.

Southern India; the company are squatting in front of him, receiving their pay in turn. The parade ground, being an open *maidan*, traversed by public roads, is free to all, and on pay-day beggars from the city hover round like hawks over carrion, and as soon as the Sepoys have been paid, importune them with whine and prayer. No. 2 shows a couple of these venerable gentlemen, with beggar's staff, rosary and begging-bowl (made from the shell of a coconut). They generally pick up a few *pice* from the easy-going Sepoys.—F. KINGDON-WARD.



PAY DAY IN THE INDIAN ARMY.





SOME explanation is needed as to why a private house was built at all in the year 1918. It happened as follows: I was discharged from the Army at the end of 1917 with a form of disablement for which I was advised to live quietly in the country for a long time. Not possessing a country home, and having found an acre of land in Buckinghamshire which admirably suited the purpose, I decided to grow food on it and at the same time try to build a small house to live in. I had better add that before August, 1914, I was an architect, and that writing thus, in the form of a personal narrative, is the simplest way to describe the experiment.

The proposal to build was considered ridiculous by most people, and local contractors refused to think about it at all. So I designed a very small house, bought a spade and dug out the foundations, assisted by an invalided Grenadier who wheeled the earth for me. This took two months. It would have taken less if the site had not been on a slope, and I was only able to do about four hours a day heavy work. Then I found a builder in the neighbourhood who was good enough to sell me most of his existing stock of materials, cart them to the site and hire me the necessary plant. What he had not available I bought myself from anyone I could find willing to sell. The timber was the greatest difficulty until I obtained leave to buy home-grown spruce for the joists and roof, and imported soft wood floor

boards for the first floor only. The ground floor had to be tiled—like a French farmhouse. There was, of course, no labour to be had. But about June, 1918, I heard of an



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FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

invalided R.E. sergeant who wished country work, building if possible.

also to do some quiet So I secured him and became myself his labourer. He was very skilled, so that by the end of August we had built the walls and put on the roof. Being unable to carry a hod, we pulled the bricks and tiles up in a clothes-basket—eight at a time—on a wheel. Though rather a mediæval method, this worked quite well. Much the hardest thing to do was mixing the mortar. On the other hand, I was surprised to find how much of the work on a building a quite unskilled person can do. For instance, it is very easy to batten a roof and hang tiles on it.

All the partitions on the first floor and some on the ground floor are made of 2in. grooved coke-breeze slabs—to save timber. I can strongly recommend them, because they can be built up easily and



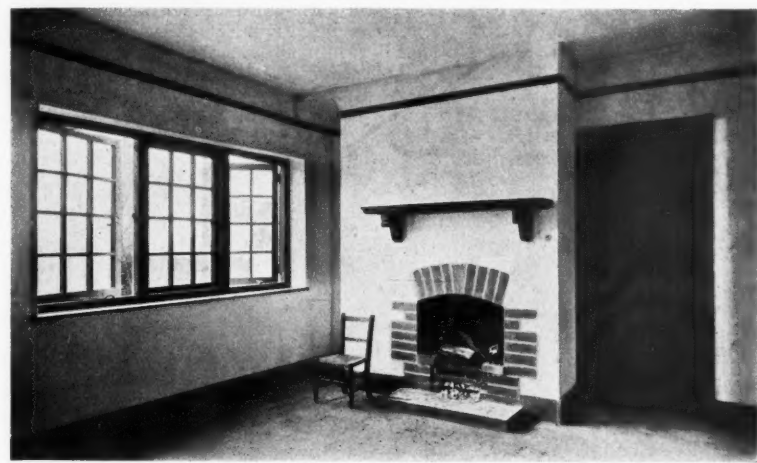
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FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

swiftly, do not require laths for plastering, and you can drive nails into them.

When the R.E. sergeant left, an old man came and we plastered the house together. He was followed by a disabled corporal who undertook the plumbing successfully. Thus the most difficult skilled work was achieved, except the joinery. All this was made by the builder who sold me materials, and I fixed it in as he sent it. Finally—about

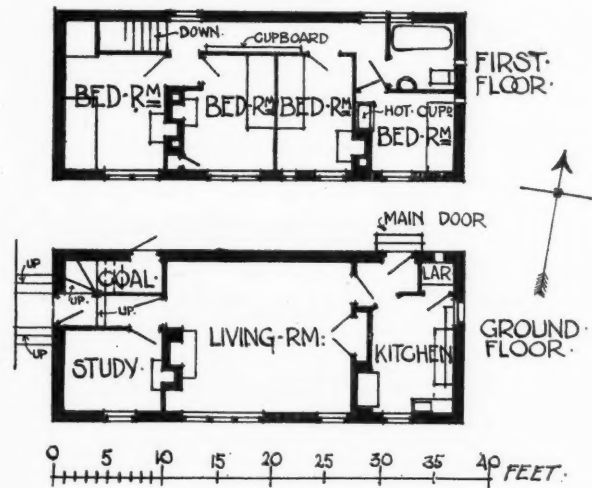


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THE LIVING-ROOM.

December—he found a painter who showed me how to distemper.

The design of the house is based, first, on the fact that the site slopes from north to south, providing both a south aspect and a fine view in that direction over the Thames Valley. Hence the long narrow shape of the plan, and most of the windows appearing on the south front. Moreover, it is easier to roof a narrow house if you have to do it yourself. Secondly, the accommodation is based on experience of small but very convenient London flats in which the minimum of space is used to the maximum advantage; for, though I had an acre to build on, I had to provide the smallest possible



THE PLANS OF CROSSWAYS.

habitable dwelling owing to the great cost of building and the £500 limit. Thirdly, and chiefly, the house is designed to be servantless, if necessary, and to save labour in it by a small but pleasant kitchen very near the dining end of the living-room, and by a rather well fitted up bathroom—to obviate washing in bedrooms.

In order to effect great economy, the ground floor rooms are only 2ins. higher and the first floor rooms the exact minimum allowed by the local authority. The windows, too, are only a trifle larger than one tenth of the floors of the rooms which they light. Also there are no mouldings in the house (except a second-hand picture rail in living-room). All angles in joinery are merely rounded—even the glazing-bars. There are no mantelpieces, except in the living-room, and all the fireplaces are plain pointed brick openings flush with the plaster face. The skirting of the ground floor is tiles instead of wood; and this economy in wood appears in the outside again in the very small eaves,

which by their slight projection saved a course or two of bricks and about 80ft. of rafter. I admit the effect is severe. The outside walls are 11in. hollow, coated with cement and sand left rough from the plasterer's tool. This was necessary, as the bricks were of several varieties. Therefore, I think it may be said that the main fabric of the house has been built at the least expense compatible with decent living; and the cost of it—that is, of the materials brought to the site—may illustrate the present price of building. They are as follows (to the nearest half-sovereign):

|  | £    | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|
| Ballast .. .. .                                    | 4    | 10 | 0  |
| Cement .. .. .                                     | 15   | 10 | 0  |
| Sand .. .. .                                       | 6    | 0  | 0  |
| Lime .. .. .                                       | 5    | 0  | 0  |
| Bricks (chiefly stock) .. .. .                     | 66   | 0  | 0  |
| Dampcourse .. .. .                                 | 4    | 10 | 0  |
| Tile paving .. .. .                                | 8    | 0  | 0  |
| All timber for joists, lintels, plates and roof .. | 40   | 0  | 0  |
| Tile battens .. .. .                               | 8    | 0  | 0  |
| Lead .. .. .                                       | 3    | 0  | 0  |
| Sand-faced roofing tiles .. .. .                   | 13   | 0  | 0  |
| Laths .. .. .                                      | 9    | 0  | 0  |
| Partitions .. .. .                                 | 10   | 10 | 0  |
| Floor boards .. .. .                               | 21   | 0  | 0  |
| Joinery made and brought to site .. .. .           | 102  | 0  | 0  |
| Nails .. .. .                                      | 0    | 0  | 0  |
| Fireplaces .. .. .                                 | 2    | 0  | 0  |
| Range, bath, cisterns, sink, lavatory basin, etc.  | 48   | 0  | 0  |
| Paint .. .. .                                      | 0    | 10 | 0  |
| Sundries .. .. .                                   | 7    | 10 | 0  |
| Total .. .. .                                      | £394 | 10 | 0  |

This does not include carting, hire of plant, drainage and finishing site, labour (except on the joinery), nor a sum for contingencies. Now, the cubic capacity of my house is 12,950ft., and the cubic capacity of a workman's cottage of the approved modern type, with a living-room, parlour, scullery and three bedrooms, averages 11,000 cubic feet. Built with the same economy as my house, by itself and to-day, the materials alone could hardly cost less than £320; that is to say, nearly £100 more than the pre-war contract price, for erecting such a building!

It occurs to one, then, that if a man can give the time to become his own builder, buys his materials as far as possible direct from the makers, and does all the unskilled work on the building himself, he can save considerably on the total cost of the house. It would not be necessary for him to be an architect, but with guidance from one and with one intelligent, skilled man on the job, I suggest that it is feasible. We have learnt to do more unusual things in the war.

A. S. G. BUTLER, Lieutenant R.F.A.

# TURF, STUD AND STABLE

On the next page is shown a striking illustration, from a painting by Mr. Lynwood Palmer, of Mr. James Buchanan's well known horse Hurry On, and I am asked to write a few lines about this latter-day celebrity of the Turf. Hurry On is a magnificent six year old chestnut horse by Marcovil from a mare named Tote Suite, and he is now the chief sire at Lavington Park Stud in Sussex, at a fee of 200 guineas. His first foals are now arriving in the world. Already there are more than half a dozen of them in existence, and as breeders do not, as a rule, send their worst mares to a horse when they have to pay a subscription of 200 guineas, it follows that the horse is being given a great chance and must produce winners in due course. Mr. Buchanan owns some of the best mares in the country. Their breeding is immaculate, and naturally Hurry On's services have been largely used in the mating of them. Everything, of course, favours the champion of the racecourse when the time comes for him to go to the stud. He has made his reputation, and as a sire he at once commands a high fee and ready patronage. It is why such notabilities as Sunstar, Polymelus, Tracery, Bayardo, instantly made good when they were retired from the racecourse. There was no need to "push" them in an advertising sense, and so it is with Hurry On.

He is, indeed, a magnificent horse, as Mr. Palmer's beautiful picture, now in Mr. Buchanan's possession at Lavington Park, shows. He stands 17h., with remarkable bone, substance and suggestion of power, and I cannot imagine there is a more impressive thoroughbred stallion in existence. Compare him, for instance, with such a diminutive equine aristocrat as Chaucer, who, as if to show that size is not everything, has certainly been a success in maintaining and improving our incomparable



breed of thoroughbreds. Followers of racing will scarcely need to be reminded that Hurry On was never beaten on the racecourse. Being a big, overgrown colt, no attempt was made to race him as a two year old, and I well remember the occasion of his *début* in public in 1916. It took place at Lingfield Park in a race for "maiden" three year olds; that is, horses which had never won a race. A very pronounced favourite in the Ring was Lord Carnarvon's Arius, but it became known that the Beckhampton stable really fancied the unknown chestnut horse, Hurry On, with the result that he, too, was well backed. At seven furlongs Arius looked like winning, but then Hurry On showed rare speed and stamina and he fairly swooped to the front, to win quite easily.

Every time he ran, which was not often, he won, and the best thing he did was to win the September Stakes at Newmarket. This was the Jockey Club's substitute race for the St. Leger, and many of my readers will recall how the Two Thousand Guineas winner of that year, the late Lord Falmouth's Clarissimus, was thought to have a great chance of lowering the big horse's colours. I know that his trainer, William Waugh, was strongly of that opinion. But what a trouncing was given to the classic winner! Hurry On, who, by the way, was not

training operations. Certain horses cannot work in heavy ground, and, bearing this in mind, it seems just as well to pay some heed to those light-fleshed candidates which do not take much work to make them fit. Such horses must hold a big advantage in the approaching race, and it is for this reason I am rather attracted by the claims of Royal Bucks, a six year old and a gelding with the modest weight of 7st. 5lb. He is stated authoritatively to be extremely well and forward in condition. However, we may know more during the coming week. Some serious galloping must be taking place. It should be said here that Rich Gift and Scatwell have been scratched, which does not, after all, materially affect the issue, as neither horse appears to have been very much fancied. Arion, on the other hand, continues to add to his following and is doing well.

Now let me turn to the subject of the Spring Horse Shows at Newmarket, and first I may be permitted to remark that it has been decided after all to hold the International Horse Show at Olympia in June. Evidently the directors are not dismayed by the decision not to hold the Naval and Military Tournament, which would have reduced the expense to either organisation of fitting out the building. The enterprise under the circumstances is distinctly a daring one, and I sincerely hope it will be most amply rewarded.

As regards the recent Shire Show, I was made to say in last week's issue that the very big stallion, Sundridge Coming King, stood 16h. The height should have been stated at 18h., which may have been obvious to readers, as I was touching on the vast stature and weight of this abnormal horse.

The weather experienced for last week's shows of thoroughbreds, hunters, polo ponies and hackneys touched the limit of misery. The incessant rain was really deplorable, making the conditions almost unbearable. I regret to notice that one of the Shire judges, Mr. Whinnerah, has since died, presumably as the result of influenza contracted while standing about in the cold and rain. I trust there have been, and will be, no more victims. The show of King's Premium thoroughbred stallions appears to have disappointed some people; but after all, what could have been expected at this critical juncture in light horse breeding? When you bear in mind the bad times imposed by the war—the drain on our supplies, the shortage of labour, the difficulty of obtaining poor forage at exorbitant prices, and the apparently hopeless prospects before breeders of carrying on at a profit—the wonder is that the show was so very good in the circumstances. So let us forbear to lament that we saw again nearly all of the same old horses filling their usual positions. With scarcely an exception, I could have marked my catalogue without making a mistake a week or two before the show was held.

Light horse breeders have much to be grateful for that Captain Tom Wickham-Boynton and the Compton Stud still find it profitable to enter largely for these premiums. It is due to their fine judgment as well as to the healthy rivalry existing between them that the horses they show are such fine examples of what they claim to be. Once again Captain Wickham-Boynton with Rathurde has triumphed over the best of the Compton Stud's team—Gay Lally—in the competition for the King's Challenge Cup. The trophy, indeed, would seem to have found a permanent resting place at Burton Agnes Hall in East Yorkshire. Rathurde is considered by some too big for an ideal hunter sire. They may be right, but Gay Lally, too, is a big horse with extraordinary quality, and it is impossible to get away from Rathurde's delightful pony-like action and his suggestion of substance and power. There must be very little between him and Gay Lally, and all I can say is that the latter is very unlucky to find such a horse, as Rathurde is always barring his progress to supreme honours.

Among the few newcomers to be well noticed as a Super Premium winner was the Welsh-owned Time Honoured, by John O'Gaunt. He is quite a nice horse in every way. Then Kings' Prize made a big impression, but the judges did not approve his hocks. Tidal Wave, which was given a Premium again, is a horse I do not like, though he is undeniably a fine mover. This time he was dropped out of the dozen Super Premium winners. Bachelor's Charm is a great horse, and if only he were a trifle bigger he would be entitled to depose Rathurde from his high estate.

PHILLIPPOS.



MR. J. BUCHANAN'S HURRY ON.

Unbeaten on the racecourse, and now at Lavington Park Stud.

entered for the classic races, simply smothered his rival in the last quarter of a mile and raced right away from him. It was, indeed, a very fine performance, and then, at any rate, it was realised that Mr. Buchanan owned a racehorse quite out of the ordinary. He never ran again after his three year old days. There was a doubt as to whether he would stand another season. The probability was that he would do so, but as the doubt existed it was decided to retire him forthwith. So now we have him holding court at the stud, and all students of breeding will watch his future career with the closest and keenest interest. Mr. Buchanan is a most admirable sportsman and gentleman, and his support of racing is absolutely invaluable. But apart from that, everyone would rejoice exceedingly were Hurry On to assist in producing for him a Derby winner in the very near future.

While on the subject of racing and thoroughbreds, may I say that a week hence I hope to make some definite suggestions as to which horses are likely to win the Lincolnshire Handicap and Grand National Steeplechase? As regards the former race, it seems to be quite clear that the Hon. George Lambton really fancies Hainault, and is satisfied with the horse's progress. What, however, makes me rather dubious is the dreadfully wet weather recently experienced and its serious interference with